

# THE Legacy

The Legacy is seeking submissions for its Fall Edition.  
The deadline is **November 9, 2012.**

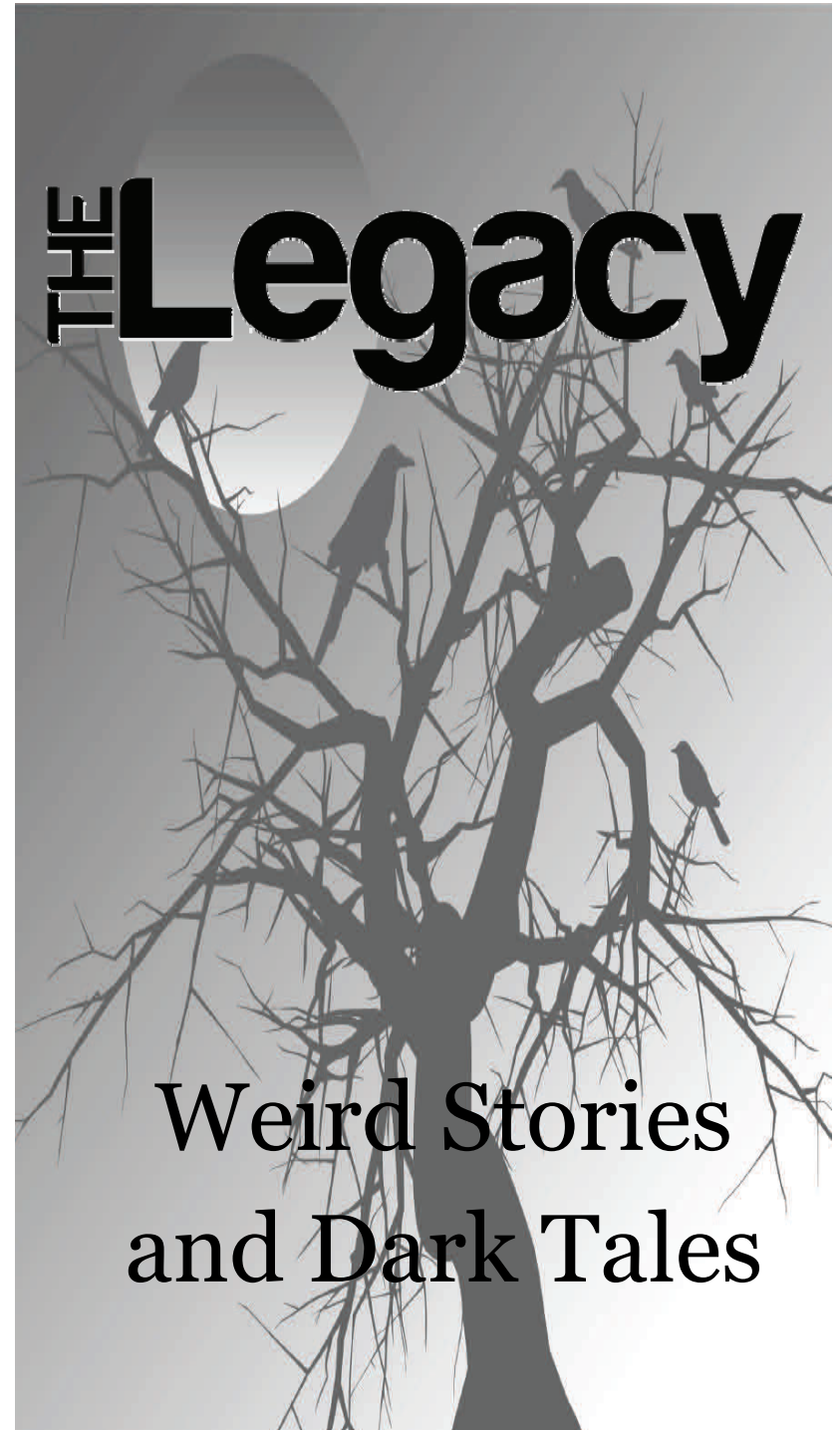


## Submission Guidelines

The Legacy accepts submissions from current WTAMU undergraduate and graduate students, alumni, faculty and staff members of the University community.

All written submissions should be sent as a .doc; .docx or .rtf attachment to **legacy@wtamu.edu** with the following information given in the body of the email:

- Your full name.
- Your name as you wish it published.
- Your major and class standing (Freshman, Sophomore, Graduate student, etc.) if a student, or year of graduation if Alumni.
- Your department if faculty or staff.
- Contact Information: email and phone number
- Additionally, identify the genre of work you are submitting in the subject line.



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Faces by Tori Trela

## FIRST PLACE

Soul  
by Bethany Jones

Dean Brookes stands at the beginning of line 6 surrounded by people in a large room that looks like a seedy bus terminal. Wearing a leather jacket, hair slicked back, biker boots, and torn jeans he fits in well. He glances around confused, as are most of the other souls around him. Except the Satanists, they seem rather happy. He's handsome, considering half of his face is missing. Sawed off shot gun to the head; quite messy.

A young demon saunters up to him. Her long white dreads fall to cover her naked chest and a sheer black skirt floats around her feet. Her skin is ashen and acid runs steadily from her eyes down her well-shaped breast, leaving rows of liquefied flesh. Her skin meshes back together after each rivulet to be burnt off again with a new tear.

"Hand." Her voice is deep and raspy. She holds what looks like a price checker.

Dean stares at her. Nothing, his eyes glaze over as she waits with impatience.

"Hand." After a long moment what little patience she had runs out. She reaches for him with her left hand. Her index finger is missing and the rest of the appendages have long petrified nails. He shudders at the feel of her skin; slippery like a fish, but scorching hot. An acid tear rolls down her arm to his hand and begins to burn his flesh. A girlish scream escapes Dean's throat. Her bottomless sockets stare back at him; pale lips pull into a humorless smile.

"Hurts, doesn't it?" Her laughter has a disturbing bass quality to it. She shoves the device against his hand. A steady beep begins.

Terror fills Dean, making his hands shake and his knees quiver like a child's. The beeping stops and a high pitched screech comes out making everyone around cringe.

"Oh, beautiful." The demon sighs and with a shake of her oily dreads, reveals her acid scarred chest.

"Congratulations!" A deep voice calls from a PA system.

Silence fills the room. Some stand frozen in fear, one soul even pees its self, while others shift uncomfortably. A Satanist girl begins to scream and laugh manically, punching herself in the face with excitement. A black clad figure, closely resembling a grim reaper, swings a wooden mallet towards the back of her head, the sound of her skull crushing echoes through the room.

Deep laughter resonates over the PA system. "Dean Brookes. Congratulations, you are soul six hundred and sixty-six of the hour."

The acid demon stares at him. "That's you, dude."

Dean looks at her in panic.

and hit the locks before she finally took a deep breath and tried to slow her racing heart. She looked at the envelope the man had handed her. It wasn't sealed. Alex's trust be damned, she needed to know what was in it. With trembling hands, she opened the flap.

She didn't know what she had expected to find. Money, maybe? She certainly didn't expect a small slip of paper that read: *One life received. Debt paid in full.* What did that even mean? She tossed the envelope onto the dash and tried to swallow the lump in her throat. It only got bigger. She tried to breathe, her lungs screaming for air. As her vision went dark, one sentence raced through her mind: *Debt paid in full.*



The Exchange  
by Carmen Terrell

Rachel sniffed the air as she shoved open the door of her beat up white Oldsmobile and stepped out into the night. She looked toward the bank of trees, where she could barely make out a figure that didn't look like branches. A gust of wind brought an orchid scent to her from that direction. The mystery man she was supposed to meet had arrived early.

With her eyes still on the motionless figure, she folded herself back into the driver's seat and grabbed the polished wooden box from the passenger's side. It was roughly the size of a small jewelry box, and the warm surface of the wood was unusually warm. For the hundredth time, she was tempted to open it. She ran her fingers over the rose design cut into the lid and took a deep breath. Alex had trusted her with this. She wasn't about to blow that to satisfy her own curiosity.

She held the box and climbed out of the car again. The mystery man was still waiting, all but invisible in the shadows. She slammed the door shut and made her way forward, a part of her wishing she had left the engine running. She had gotten about four feet away from her car when the back of her neck began to tingle. Something was off. She stopped and scanned the area, trying to figure out what was bothering her. After a moment, she realized what it was. She wasn't hearing anything. There were no animal sounds coming from the clearing or the trees. It was like all other living creatures had vacated the premises. The only sound was the breeze picking its way through the grass.

All of her instincts warned her not to step out of what pale moonlight there was. Without taking another step, she held the box up in front of her and waited. After a couple of minutes, he finally abandoned his cover and limped toward her, dragging his left foot as he walked. In the darkness, the only features she could make out were broad shoulders, lousy posture, and Dick Tracy's fashion sense.

Rachel tried to get a good look at him under his wide-brimmed hat and long coat, but there was no way to get a better angle without being obvious. He didn't say a word as he took the box from her and produced a crisp white envelope from an inside pocket. After passing the envelope to her, he turned around and limped away, cradling the box in both hands as if he were afraid he might break it.

He was several yards away from the tree line when she blinked. When she opened her eyes, he was nowhere to be seen. The orchid smell had completely disappeared. An owl hooted, and all at once, the area erupted into sound. Crickets chirped, birds flew into nests, and squirrels scrambled around in the trees. It was like someone had paused a CD in the middle of a song, and then suddenly hit play again. Everything came back at once.

She forced herself to keep a slow pace back to her car. She wrenched the door open, dumped herself into the seat, hauled the door shut,

"You win a tour!" She says through pointed teeth. A teenager working in fast food could feign happiness better than her.

"My name's Alistair and I'll be your guide."

Something prods Dean's back, pushing him through the blackened gate. A glance back makes him wish he hadn't. A black scorpion-man crawls behind him. He snaps his pinchers at Dean with relish and a gurgling laugh comes from it. Dean quickens his pace to be closer to Alistair.

"...and that's the lava pit. Over here's 17<sup>th</sup> century torture and, my all-time favorite, staking."

Dean opens his mouth and, with effort, utters a sentence. "What is," he pauses for breath, "staking?"

"It's where someone rams a stake into your anal cavity for...oh, I shouldn't ruin the experience for you." Alistair sees the horror on Dean's face and laughs harshly.

"Oh, you won't be going their first. Your destination is flaying." They'd been walking down a long row of doors, stepping up to one she pulls at it and, with a couple of jerks, it opens revealing a black opening. "I would give you a better tour, but I would rather hear your screams."

The scorpion-man pushes Dean violently with his pinchers; he tries to catch the door jamb but trips instead, and just barely hears Alistair call back to him in a sing-song voice.

"Welcome to Hell."

A sign above the door blinks 'Occupied: Soul 666'.



## SECOND PLACE

Nothing to Fear...

by Josh West

A girl walked alone on cracking snow like a field of glass beneath her feet. She hated that. She didn't understand why the sun had to heat that top layer just enough to melt, only for it to freeze overnight. What once was powdery snow, the kind just right for that perfect snow angel, was now a harsh layer of ice. And she hated ice. She feared slipping and falling.

She shivered off the thoughts and kept walking cautiously. She hated thinking of things she was afraid of, but more often than not, that's what happened. After all, she was afraid of a lot of things. You know, like spiders, and water, and darkness. While swimming in the lake, her friends would tease her of the unseen creatures just beneath the glistening surface. She hated not seeing, and she feared what she hated. Or maybe vice versa.

Her pastor would say "there's nothing to fear with God by your side." Yet, it was hard for her to respect these words. He lived in a nice house, his wife had a high-paying job, and they had two kids with good grades. The daughter was artistic, the son athletic, and aside from being a couple of snide pricks, they were everything a father could have wanted out of two children. So how could he possibly understand conviction in the midst of tribulation? She kept walking alone with nothing but her thoughts to keep her blood warm.

A twig snapped somewhere hidden behind her. She exhaled, trying to imagine her fears leaving in that mist of anxious breath. She continued on her walk, ignoring the terror racing through her heart. She was tired of jumping at shadows and she knew she had to overcome her fear. She just couldn't understand how religion solved this problem. After all, how can fearing your creator really take away your fears? It seemed to her that religious congregations were simply so terrified of God that their other fears just weren't worth fearing anymore. But that couldn't truly mean they were no longer afraid, could it? She stopped in front of a nice house.

She looked at the neat little sidewalk and icy lawn. The unadulterated snow glistened as if it was created by a thousand tiny diamonds all sparkling at once. She hated to think it would be her tracks that ruined the purity of the scene. Yet, it was fitting.

had said some pretty awful things to my girlfriend, like really terrible things, and he said them in front of that little girl. What kind of world is this where we allow things like that to happen? That shit kept me up at night. Have you ever been so angry that you just shake, like you're whole body convulses? Anyway, so I've got him in the chair, right? I used some super out-of-date local anesthetic on his mouth, left over from the dentist's office days. I also got to play with that spit suction machine. Man, that thing was a mess by the end of it. I don't usually handle blood very well, but I powered through it. I used a scalpel from one of those student dissection kits; like cutting up a frog, right? Not like that one had any chance of turning into Prince Charming anytime soon. Then I stitched him up with plain old needle and thread, stuffed a bunch of gauze in his mouth, and took him back to his mom's place.

**Victim: Joseph Kowalski, unemployed:** (unintelligible mumbling)



Mind Your Tongue  
by Christopher Rigel

*The following is a record of official police statements pertaining to the events of Saturday, October 13 in Amarillo, Texas.*

**Witness: Matthew Fuller, bartender:** It was just me and the door guy working that night, and we were packed. The one guy was just drinking beer, but he got out of hand pretty early, so I cut him off. The other guy, his friend I guess, said he'd take him home, so he pretty much carried him out. That's all that I saw of them.

**Witness: Nathaniel Porter, bouncer:** That guy was hammered. The other guy seemed okay. He'd been drinking, but at least he was walking. He carried him out and they drove off.

**Witness: Margaret Kowalski, retired, mother of victim:** He dropped off Joey in the morning. I had seen him before next door at that girl's place, but I never talked to him. He helped him up onto the porch and left. Joey just sat there for a while. He looked drunk, so I took him inside and got him to bed, took his shoes off, and all that. I went to get him some water, and when I came back he was holding this wad of cotton all bloody and wet.

**Witness: Katelynn Kowalski, student - 8<sup>th</sup> grade, niece of victim:** My grandmother took Joey to his room. Then she just starts like screaming and Joey was crying, like bawling.

**Assailant: Christopher Rigel, university student:** The whole ordeal was actually a lot easier than I thought. I showed up at the bar alone, and he was alone, too. I was really hoping his friend would be with him, but I was actually kind of glad he wasn't. I don't know what I would have done with two guys by myself. I probably had enough Rohypnol to drop an elephant, and then I found out this guy had even more. At one point he got up to go to the restroom and left his coat on his chair. Can you believe the irony in that? I mean, he's there just waiting for some girl to leave her drink unattended, and he walks away from his drugs. I didn't have to use any of my own. So I dosed him up, carried him out, and took him to my friend's place. My friend had bought this old building that used to be a dentist's office, still had some of the old chairs and equipment. I used some of those heavy-duty zip ties to hold him down, not that I needed to; he was out. And look, I'm not the kind of person that resorts to violence right away. I think most things can be worked out with words, just talking. But you just can't talk to some people, you know? There's just no reasoning with them. And what do you do when words are the problem in the first place? This guy

She pulled a knife out of one of her pockets. It was a hunting knife, one of the good ones that could be used 'to skin a deer in under twenty seconds.' At least, that's what her dad told her. His father had given him the knife, and he gave her the same one every time he left town. It comforted her, and served as proof he would always come back for it. And for her. But one day, he didn't, although she couldn't blame him for that. She sighed to herself, remembering that was the day she learned there's no way to avoid fear. Her pastor always told her otherwise. He told her that without being good and fearing God, there was no way she could see her father again. But she hated not seeing, and she feared what she hated. No, if God was to be feared, then definitely vice versa.

That night, a wife with a high-paying job drove her artistic daughter and athletic son home to a nice house with tracks through an otherwise untouched snowy lawn. There was a tinge of red tainting the sheet of soft ice, and the front door was left open. Inside, there was a note left on the body of a pastor:

**This man believed he would be saved if he feared God,  
And that hate was his only way to love.  
I looked into his eyes, saw his true nature,  
And in his final moments, He did not fear God.  
He only feared Me.**

**-A Girl With Nothing Left To Fear-**



## SECOND PLACE

I'm Alive

by Rebekah St. Clair

I can feel someone staring at me, but I'm not sure why. I walk alone in this park all of the time. In any case, I guess I should start walking home and stick close to the well-lit spots instead of taking my normal short cuts. I swear, someone is watching me, but I can't see anyone anywhere close to me.

My phone rings and startles me until I see it is Grace calling me. I answer with, "Hey Skank. What's up?"

"Chloe, where are you? It is 11:55pm. I thought you were going to be here to watch movies with me by midnight?" Grace thinks I'm insane for wandering alone at night, but I have always been more comfortable in darkness.

"Yeah, sorry. I was just out walking again. I swear, I will be there soon." With that, I hung up my phone because I swear, someone is staring at me.

I continue to make my way to my car with this uneasy feeling that I can't exactly describe. Out of nowhere, I feel one arm around my waist and a hand against my mouth to keep others from hearing me scream. I'm not really sure what is happening. Everything goes black.

Waking up from the haze induced by whatever was on that person's hand is really hard. I am definitely not at home because this place is cold and uninviting with hospital feel. I wonder how long I've been out of it. It's been at least a day since I can't see any sunlight, but I really don't know.

I can hear someone talking in another room, and even though I am straining my ears, I can't make out a word the people are saying. I fell trying to get closer to the door. Great, my graceful nature has betrayed me again. I bet they heard me fall, and just as I suspected, they came into the room.

side the corner store for some crackers and when we got out you had wandered off! What did that cheap-ass medium say to you? I swear you thought we were coming after you." Sadie smelled the alcohol on Jack's breath, but she knew he was scolding her and that he was doing it sober. "I-i-I d-d-don't kn-know" she stammered, hoping that that would be enough for him to back off. "Let's get you home" Jack said as he helped her off the ground, "You've obviously had too much fun for one night."

Upon arriving home for the night, Sadie took a hot shower to melt off the sweat and mist that had found its way onto every part of her body and changed into her pajamas. Nothing to worry about...

The doorbell rang.

*Who would be coming by at this hour?* Sadie sauntered to the front door and opened it, shocked to see who was on her doorstep. "What the fu---" was all she could muster before the medium, equipped with a knife and a crazed look in her eye, was upon her.





The Medium's Prediction  
by Katie Nichols

"Come on, Sadie! It's just a hoax!"

"Yeah, don't be such a scaredy-cat!"

Sadie clenched her teeth and squeezed her eyes closed to try and rid her mind of the medium's prediction. Her friends Jack and Jordan were playing it off like it wasn't a big deal. They obviously hadn't heard what the medium had told her.

"You are in grave danger" she had said.

"Wh-wh-what do you mean?"

"Someone has been watching you, for how long, I cannot tell. This watcher is sinister, OOOH..." The medium began to shake and convulse as if something that had possessed her was leaving her body.

She gasped. "I'm sorry dear, what did I say?" the medium questioned as the color returned to her face.

"N-n-nothing" Sadie stuttered as she ducked out of the shop.

Sadie donned her hoodie and stuffed her hands hastily into her pockets. *This is such bullshit...that would never happen to me.* Her friends staggered ahead, intoxicated from the drinks they had consumed earlier that evening. Due to stupidity brought on by intoxication they had ended up in the shitty part of town outside of a palm reading shop, and that same stupidity had gotten them roped in to a palm reading. The only thing was, when Sadie went back to have her palm read the slouchy medium had immediately straightened up, gotten a crazy look in her eye, and started to babble about how Sadie was in danger!

The sound of bushes rustling behind her brought Sadie out of her head and back into the world. She glanced over her right shoulder and then her left, the words of the medium tracking inside of her head, over-and-over again like a broken record. Her words echoed through Sadie's skull, and she realized that she was alone. Where had her friends gone? *They were just here!* Frantically, she began to yell for them, but no answer. She wondered if they'd wandered off, or if she had, and a feeling of panic began to well up inside her. An icy breeze began to blow, and then she heard them; footsteps, and then her name. Not bothering to look back, Sadie began to run, adrenaline pulsating inside her.

"SADIE!!" the voice called again in a more hostile tone. Sadie's feet struck the ground, her heart pounding like a large drum, her breaths becoming shorter and shorter as the cold constrained her windpipe. Goosebumps covered her entire body as she ducked behind a dark, looming tree and gasped for air to return to her lungs. A shadow came upon her.

"What in the hell do you think you're doing?" exclaimed Jack, who had begun to sober up in the time that they had been separate. Jordan slowly staggered up behind him, the same incredulous look on his face. "We've been trying to catch up with you! You zoned out and we went in-

They are holding a syringe. Why are they medicating me? And why am I chained to this bed? I don't understand what is going on.

I start crying when I hear Grace whisper, "Shhh, Chloe, we are just trying to help you. I promise, it will all be okay soon." I really wanted to scream, but everything went black.

Grace sitting by my bed reading a book is the only thing I can almost see. Why is she in scrubs? Am I in a hospital? What happened that night I was taking a walk? I am so confused. I open my mouth to talk, but no words come out. I am screaming, but no one can hear me. I don't understand. I see nurses and doctors come in and out of the room. They are talking about how I may not recover. Recover from what? What the hell is going on? Hello! I am right here! Someone talk to me and tell me what is going on! I am here!

Kidnapped. I was kidnapped. And beaten. Pretty bad. Grace isn't reading just any book. She's reading the Bible to pick out the perfect scripture for my funeral. I'm not going to make it. All the doctors have declared me brain dead and say it's only a matter of time before I leave this Earth. I want to yell at the doctors and tell them I can still hear them, and I am still here, but it is useless. They have no idea that my mind is still functioning. The monitors aren't making the right sounds for them to believe that I am anything but a vegetable. Grace is crying and trying to convince them I'm not dead. Thanks, Grace. I appreciate that, but the doctors are telling her it is time for her to let me go so I can rest in peace. I am still here.

Everything becomes super dark then a bright flash of light. I have no idea what is going on, but I am pretty sure Grace could not save me.



## HONORABLE MENTION

### The Music Box

by Jesse Jones

Marcus Dexter and his family came from Charleston to Bridgeberg in the winter of 1924, as the town's new district attorney. While the position was not Marcus' first choice, work was scarce, and his need to provide for his wife and two daughters was vital. A suitable house was found near the edge of the primeval Monongahela forest, upon which Bridgeberg had once subsisted as a logging community. Those mills were now dark and hollow like the eyes of many of its residents.

Marcus could scarcely believe the price of the decrepit manor, which in better times, had been the abode of old Mayor Wainwright, but since his passing had fallen into disrepair, and seemed shunned by locals, though it was not until later that the Dexter family learned why.

Townfolk told Marcus that Bridgeberg was a cursed town. Since the blood of many men had been absorbed by the forest during the war, children had begun vanishing. These disappearances were attributed to chance and tragedy, but by 1885, it was clear that some nameless terror was preying on the town's youth every Walpurgis Night. That year the town parson had given his daughter a small silver music box for her fifth birthday. Her fondness of the gift was clear, and it too had gone missing when she vanished. Every April since, many claimed the melody of the music box, beautiful but forlorn, could be faintly heard on the wind near the manor.

As winter faded into early spring, the Dexter family began to notice that the wind off the forest seemed to carry with it an ominous musical quality. Convinced that his family had become influenced by the town's stories, Marcus dismissed their pleas to move. He dared not mention that some nights, while drifting to sleep, he too thought he heard that sad melody on the wind.

As April progressed and Walpurgis Night drew near, the wind became worse. The twisted limbs of ancient trees scraped the house maliciously. Mrs. Dexter demanded that the children be sent to live with her mother for the remainder of the month. Marcus would hear nothing of it, dismissing her superstitious fears.

bun in my basket and sending me off to Nan's room in the "tricky" West Wing.

\*\*\*

Nan's door was ajar, spilling some of the darkness hiding beyond the door out into the hall. I must have frowned as I pushed it open and tried the light switch. It didn't work, but the bright moonlight silently creeping in from around the window shade was enough to alert me that Grandma's white bed was empty.

"N-Nan...?" I didn't know why I whispered as I took another step inside, or why the hair on my arms stood up. The air was thick with a heavy, foreboding static; the kids' shrieks from the next wing seemed eons away.

"Casssssssiieeeee." Growled the corner of the room.

The door shut behind me as a thick set of claws closed on my hood.

The funny thing about fairy tales is that they're different depending on who the storyteller is. My Grandma had always told me the wolf was a stray, cut up by the huntsman and that the humans lived happily ever after.

Now I know – probably better than anyone – that there's something wolvisish in all of us.



Canis Lupus  
by Mattie McAlavy

“Cassie, come on! Can’t it wait just one more day? How often does Halloween happen on the full moon? Silver Strike’s party is going to be the shit! No cover before midnight – ”

“Forget it, Blake. I promised I’d visit her every Thursday. A promise is a promise.”

My best friend since grade school eyed me warily from across our lunch table. He knew how much my grandmother meant to me, which is probably why he dropped the subject, though that didn’t stop him from sulking the rest of the day away and muttering darkly about how we would’ve won the original costume contest as Little Red and her “pet” wolf.

\*\*\*

Dad had “gotten out on night” when I was too young to remember him, and since my Mom worked herself ragged and “dog-tired” just to keep us fed, Grandma took up the reins in raising me. She fell into a coma after she was mugged on her way home just before the start of my senior year of high school.

I balled like a baby and refused to leave her for the first few days; the head nurse Mrs. Phelps had to call my school and explain my absences; Mom couldn’t afford to leave work. At first I had been angry with her – she couldn’t spare an hour to visit her own mother?! – until between wishing horrible coma-inducing traumas on her to see how SHE liked it, I realized Grandma would’ve been ashamed of me for even thinking of such terrible things.

“Please... Wake up soon...” I blubbered between guttural sobs and howls.

\*\*\*

I had chosen the Little Red Riding Hood costume because the fable was my favorite – Grandma had regaled me with it so many times I knew it by heart. I had even found a basket to wear on my arm use as a candy bucket before I’d realized Halloween fell on a Thursday.

*Oh well. I’d thought, turning into the hospital parking lot. Knowing Mrs. Phelps, there’ll be some trick-or-treating to be had after all...*

The hollow October wind tugged at the red cape tied around my shoulders, as if trying to pull me back to my car. Mrs. Phelps was just inside the main doors, telling a pair of fairy children and their parents that the patients in the East Wing would be handing out the treats this year, but to avoid the West Wing if they didn’t want any *tricks*.

“Why, Mrs. Phelps – what a big imagination you have!” I teased, once the kids were out of earshot. Mrs. Phelps grinned at me, and I was tempted to tack a, “And what big teeth you have!” comment on as well.

“Don’t be silly, dear. It’s the quiet ones you have to watch out for, after all...” The demure nurse countered with a wink before tucking a honey

At midnight on April 28, Marcus awoke with a chill. He could distinctly hear underneath the brushing of the trees that hopeless melody. For the first time fear seized him. The next day he purchased a revolver, a new door bolt, and lumber which he used to board the windows of the old manor. That night the music awoke the entire family. Marcus took the revolver and the electric torch and walked around the house seeking the source of the sound, but found nothing save the mockingly waving trees in the wind.

The next morning Mrs. Dexter and the children left for Charleston. Marcus was livid, and swore that he would remain in the house and prove that there was no danger from the aged manor, the forest, or the infernal, melodiously laden wind.

As dusk approached the wind began to howl. The notes of the melody became so piercing that Marcus feared his skull would split. He stomped about frantically, throwing over furniture, and tearing plaster off the walls. He would find the source of that demonic melody. Entering the atrium, the old hardwood floor gave way and sent him tumbling into a dark hollow. He had been carrying the electric torch and as he cast its light in the unknown space, terror gripped him. Before him lay the bones of countless children tangled in a mess of tree roots that seemed to extend in every direction, part of some vast underground maze, roots that had become engorged from the feast of innocent blood. The forest, upon which the town was once sustained, now took its share of nourishment from the innocent. The melody was a desperate plea from beyond, a trail of breadcrumbs to this unholy growth. Upon a mass of tangled roots, clutched in a small, lifeless, bony hand laid the music box.



Farmhouse  
by Travis Allison

The little farm was bathed with dusky gloom. Sam gazed out for a moment and returned to tinkering with his shabby moldboard.

"Goddamn fence is sinking, Henri," he said, smearing the dust and sweat on his forehead.

"I don't mind sinking fences, boss; it's the light that gets me. Don't seem like daytime when these damned storms start to blow up."

"Won't wanna be out tomorrow; it'll be on us by dark."

"Dark'll be on us damn quick too."

They walked up to the house where the women were already wetting down towels and hanging them over windows and doors. Sam stopped on the porch and looked back out over the fields. There was a black wall on the horizon, and with a shift of wind, it set upon the farm. The dogs picked up on something and were carrying on furiously. Little shards of quartz stung his face as the wind gusted; he knew it would be a bad one.

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Sam sat up in bed and listened to the sand crackling against his windowpane. There was something different about this storm. He stood up and made his way through the house, checking his daughter's room first and then his son's. As he eased his boy's door open, his ears were filled with the scurrying of scratchy paws on the hardwood and horrible yelps. He burst into the living room; the dogs were foaming and scratching at the front door.

"Settle down you devils! Surely it's a damned skunk, and probably rabid if he's stupid enough to be out in this mess! Back, damn you!"

He let the door open wide enough for the beasts to take their leave. He hated to let them out in this storm, but he knew he wasn't lucky enough to get rid of them that easily. His young ones would give him hell about it; he knew he'd be going after them tomorrow.

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Sam stepped off the porch and into the dusty morning haze with a wet kerchief tied across the bottom of his face and an old repeater balanced on his shoulder. His eyes were squinted, and visibility was low anyhow. He set off for the fields.

"Probably choked to death," he mumbled. Strange noises carried on the wind as he moved further into the field. Sam wasn't a fearful man, but something within him shuttered. He noticed a terrible stench just as his foot snagged on something, and he fell to the ground. He was groping at the sand and sprang up with a fistful of bloody pulp and fur. He saw at his feet the remnants of one of his hounds. Rather than fleeing, he crouched and surveyed what he could make out. The sounds were growing louder, and the rancidity in the air was overwhelming. Up ahead, he saw the visage of people. They seemed to be wandering aimlessly with an awful lack of grace.

dead Witch. Caroline moved back in, and everything seemed to be normal with her family. School was good, her friends were great, and she was no longer considering herself to be crazy.

Everything was fine until the morning she woke up, and the hole was back. Just like it had been before, and just like it appeared in her dreams. A scream alerted the household as she ran towards the door. Caroline told them what she had seen, but her father saw nothing while investigating. The hole was gone. Caroline wondered "Am I going crazy?" This thought haunted her all day. She couldn't eat, think, or process conversations.

After a long day, Caroline was happy to be home and finally relaxed. It was late and time to go to sleep. So she tucked herself in bed, and drifted off in a matter of seconds. Caroline woke up startled by the witch being on top of her, pinning her down. Screams were lost in the panic that overtook her. Then she caught a glimpse of her doorway. Her beloved parents were standing there giving a strange smirk. "Your grandmother has been waiting for you my dear" spoke the benevolent parents. Caroline's blood curling scream was cut off by the biting of her throat. She too, was never seen or heard from again.



## The Witching Hole

by Daniel Innis

It had only been a month since Caroline's family moved to a small town. They lived in an old, rickety house in the country. The family had just one daughter, and Mr. Wilson thought it would be good if they had a change of scenery. She did her best to adjust to the new house and school until the truth about the house came out.

While at school, a weird girl approached Caroline in the bathroom "Have you seen her yet?" asked the stranger. "Have you seen the Witch that was buried underneath your house?" There was a brief moment of shock followed by "She died, and was buried in that house. Some kids went missing a couple of years ago. Their bodies were never found." Caroline paused to soak up the information, but then the bell rung and the girl was gone.

All throughout school the thoughts of the Witch enticed Caroline's curiosity. Could the scratching on the wall that she heard at night be the Witch? Such thoughts were rendered pointless to her as logic sank in.

One day after taking a shower, Caroline slipped and knocked over her dresser. The dresser left a hole in the wall, but it was not just a hole. It was a hidden passage behind her wall, and the smell that came from the way birthed a sense of death and decay. The passage was dark, and had not been touched for some time. Caroline decided to investigate. She grabbed a flashlight, and some nerves to go with it.

After braving the hallway, she came to a room under the house. She blinked twice, but her eyes did not deceive her. The room was filled with corpses chained to the ceiling. She now understood the smell. Suddenly she heard a chain rattle, and one of the bodies moved. "Was it the body?" she thought, but it wasn't. Her eyes gazed lower and there she saw it! It was the rotten body of the witch clawing towards her at a supernatural speed. Caroline dashed for the way out, but it wasn't so easy to escape.

As she leaped out of the hole, her leg was seized by a powerful grip. She screamed and kicked her way to freedom. She left no time for questions, but only enough time to see the corpse staring at her from the hole.

Her parents did not believe her, nor did they find a secret passage from the hole in the wall. Time went on and Caroline stayed with a friend for a month before accepting her parent's invitation to return home. The hole was patched and there were no traces of a

"Hey! Who the hell are you?" he yelled before he realized the stupidity of it.

This got their attention, but no answer was returned. They conformed in one unnatural march toward him. He lowered his rifle and yelled out.

"Come any closer and I'll shoot, ya hear!"

As they lumbered closer, he noticed they were human enough; however, they were putrid and gritty and smeared with blood and fur. They bore wounds that no man could sustain; his dogs ripped the throat clear out of one to the point her head sagged to one side, but she reached toward him still, her mouth gaping hungrily. He looked down the rifle and fired. Her head cleaved in two, and in a spray of blood and hair she twisted to ground. The others approached unaffected. He ran.

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It was going on two days that they'd been holed up in the house. Windows were boarded over, and the heaviest furniture blocked the doors. Sam looked upon his family; the old house creaked and groaned as they pressed in from all sides.



Descent  
by J. Eric Dennis

One of H.P. Lovecraft's lesser known works is the short story "The Dreams in the Witch House," first published in the July 1933 edition of *Weird Tales*. In this somewhat atypical Lovecraftian story, the protagonist, a Miskatonic University student named Walter Gilman, rents a room at a strange boarding house steeped in folklore nicknamed the "Witch House" and situated on the outskirts of Arkham, Massachusetts. Immediately upon his arrival at the house, Gilman, whose studies focus on mathematics but whose interests reside in folklore, begins to notice a number of unusual elements of the room in which he is staying. In this story, Lovecraft once again masterfully uses his incredible descriptive technique as well as his unique otherworldly diction to describe these discoveries Gilman makes over time. Specifically, Lovecraft makes clever use of the languages of mathematics, quantum science, and architecture to effectively describe Gilman's slow descent into madness.

Lovecraft is known by literary critics (not to mention his fiercely loyal fan base) for his powerful narrative description, and "The Dreams in the Witch House" proves to be another example. Lovecraft wastes no time in employing his descriptive artistry, describing for the reader Gilman's disposition as "growing sensitive to a preternatural and intolerable degree" (2368) and Gilman's clock as having a "ticking [which] seemed like a thunder of artillery" (2368). Moreover though, Lovecraft soon lays the groundwork for his repeated use of the languages of mathematics and quantum science when he says of Gilman's studies that "non-Euclidean calculus and quantum physics are enough to stretch any brain" (2370). I'm feeling kind of nauseated; must have been the cod. Later in the same passage, he brings in architectural language as well when he describes the folklore Gilman is immersed in as "tracing a strange background of multi-dimensional reality behind ... the chimney-corner" (2370). Dizzy, too. Lovecraft continues to use this odd pairing of otherworldly description with mathematical and architectural diction when he describes some of what Gilman had discovered in the Essex County records about the seventeenth century old witch, Keziah Mason, and the Witch House which he would soon be staying in: "She had told ... of lines and curves that could be made to ... point out directions leading through the walls of space to other spaces beyond" (2371). That's impossible. How could that be? What is there beyond???

Gilman's first impression of his room was that is "was of good size but queerly irregular in shape" (2375). Even with this first queerly irregular description, one can see not only the queerly irregular diction common to much of his work as in 'queerly' in this queerly irregular case, but also the first insertion of geometric language when he queerly irregular writes 'irregular shape.' Head is spinning. Pounding. Spinning...

down the staircase, she fled from the house toward the cliff's edge. Sebastian at her heels, she ran off the edge, the boy suddenly gone from her grasp, as if a mist had lifted. Realizing her fate, she closed her eyes.

Sebastian reached the cliff in time to see her body hit the rocks, her confused eyes staring into his. The flames blew out, as if Katharine's tears reached inside him and replaced the anger with guilt. He fell to his knees, crying out in anguish. The feeling of a hand on his shoulder brought him back, and turning to see to whom it belonged, saw the little boy with green eyes. An innocent smile spread across his bloody face, as he pushed Sebastian over the edge, a force drawing him downward. Looking upon those eyes, he saw the entire scene of his death but had no time to ponder, his body landing next to that of his Katharine.



Portrait  
by Margaretha Kroeker Guenther

Katharine and Sebastian wandered into the abandoned house by the cliff, the sun's last few rays breaking through the dirty windows. What wasn't covered in thriving vines, was cracked or hanging onto the structure by small hinges. Spider webs and dust from years of isolation covered everything inside. A family portrait hung by the grand staircase, a handsome father, black hair and piercing blue eyes stood next to his beautiful wife, gold hair and peaceful green eyes, who held a young boy, with his father's dark hair but his mother's gentle eyes. Katharine gently traced the boy's face with her finger, a sudden sadness consuming her.

"Looks just like you, Katharine." Sebastian said, looking at the young family. He noticed the mirrored image of himself as the proud husband and father, and an angry flame sparked within that began to devour him. He brought his hands up to his face, trying to erase the feeling, but instead smeared blood across his face. Searching his hands for cuts, and seeing none, he searched for the source, but found none. The flames now raged, burning to ashes his concern.

Katharine, filled with the sudden impulse to climb the stairs, found herself at the top and walking into a room she never would've known had it not been for this odd feeling of remembrance. Toys scattered all over the floor were decaying, the evidence of rodents and time eating them away. A small bed on the far wall sat with wrinkled sheets, the form of a small body still wrapped within. Katharine's eyes brimmed with tears as she walked over, gently turning over the cold remains. Bruises covered the small limbs, with holes all over his filthy clothes, blood streaming from cuts all over his body. Terrified, lifeless eyes stared into her, her tears streamed down her face, mixing with the innocent blood, a heartbreaking mixture that fell in big drops on the floor. She pulled the corpse close to her breast, crying out in agony of unknown origin. She didn't know this child, but her heart loved him and her hands knew his young touch.

Sebastian had been leaning on the door frame, his arms crossed angrily across his chest. He quietly strode across to where the mother grieved. Looking over her shoulder, he gently moved some hair from the dead eyes, blood smearing across the perfect face. Katharine flinched at his touch, and seeing his bloody hands, slowly backed away from him.

"He was in the way, Katharine." Sebastian's voice was not his own, his words coming from somewhere deep inside him, as if the sound of the cracking flames could be heard from the outside. "Now we can live our lives again."

"My life ended the minute you took our son's, Sebastian!" Katharine's voice replied without her thinking, the breaking of her heart causing her voice to crack and fresh tears to fall. When he tried, once again, to come near, she fled from the room, the young, limp limbs hanging from her arms. Running

Lovecraft's descriptions of non-Euclidean descriptions continue when he writes about discussions Gilman had with his professors regarding "freakish curvatures in space" and "solitary eccentricity" and "infinite remoteness" Lovecraft posits odd angles mathematical significance

boundaries of the world space

certain angles

"downslanting surface" "in wardslant ing wall" Keziah

However, it is when Lovecraft begins to describe Gilman's dreams that baffling his incredible writing prowess comes to "betwixt Keziah and the devil"

Convergent perpendicular strate lines "odd -shaped corner"

Describes Gilman room about "hypnotic effect" and as when beyond

Although this could be interpreted as

Although this could be interpreted as

nausea...

If for "nightly ghostlike phantsees" in other Riemannian equations.. Gilman goes on to describe the descent as "requiring only two stages; first passage out 3dimensional kno, w andsecond passage back t o three dimen siona l s p h e r e"" end of quote parentheses period

Einstein Heisenberg

Godel

Hawking

Keziah

Keziah

Nahab

Keziah

Abdul Alhazred

Keziah

Keziah

"forbidden secrets under lock and key"

"connect his mathematics with the fantastic legends of elder magic"

Why? Why? WHY?????????

His professors told him to "slacken up and cut down his course load." (page number.)

"forbidden secrets"

"forbidden secrets"

"fo rbidde nsssse cretsss"

isfantorfonal teemorgantryfantasifianiac;Ibenoit

mathmaticl depths

depths depths depths depths de

## Luna

by Eric E. Gonzalez

The moon stood against the star-studded satin sky like an alabaster marble rolling toward the edge of oblivion. The light from its surface danced with the chill of the wind to make the night as beautiful as it was unbearable. Several feeble wisps of cloud hung overhead, their thin grey outlines only visible when bathed in the iridescent glow of the slow-moving sphere—they complemented the heavenly bodies to form a perfect portrait of the Witching Hour on All-Hallows-Eve. Still, she saw in the scene a surreal beauty: primitive, reminiscent of a time before beauty was defined by man. The town lay quiet, a hamlet covered by sleep's dream-filled embrace. The streets were empty.

She looked at the moon with a distant gaze, and a nostalgic smile slowly etched itself across her face. Since she was a girl, her best friend—her only friend—had always been that shimmering angel perched in the sky. She grinned at the moon and it grinned back; she spoke and it listened eagerly to her every word. In all the world, the moon was the only one who cared. In its company, she confided her darkest secrets.

So enchanted was she by the moon, that on nights when it failed to be present, the woman gave way to a type of melancholy reserved only for children who have known the pain of abandonment. So confusing was this strain on her soul that each new moon she would fall into hysteria, beating her fists against the ground, crying until her hands were mangled and crimson. Upon its return, her joy at finding the heavenly body back overhead could only be described in some language of pure emotion never before conceived by man; her heart would sing in this utopian tongue.

So dependent was she on the moon's presence, you see, that without it the memories would creep to the surface of her mind. The sound of cruel laughter rang from her childhood to the present. It rang until memories of peace flooded back to her. It rang until she recalled the police finding her on the front porch, staring up at the sky. It rang even after the laughter finally stopped.

Only the moon could banish these thoughts away. Only the beautiful, flawless moon!

Over time, though, something changed within the woman's soul. Gradually, her once affectionate gaze turned to one of contempt. The face of her guardian contorted itself into a scowl in her mind's eye, judgmental and full of disgust. Guilt weighed upon her until images forced themselves past her eyes—a man, a woman, two children. A knife. Innocent screams filled the air as scarlet water ran to the floor, running through every linoleum crack to form branches of the River Styx. And all the while, she sobbed in wild delight.

She laughed. And laughed . And laughed.  
And laughed.

And then, the laughter faded.

The streets were empty, but she could not walk them. Her cage kept her locked away like a nightingale, eager to fly off into the evening chirping a passionate melody. She reached out to the pristine pearl, miles away, and held the precious jewel in her palm. So priceless a gem bought her faith, yet also cost her sanity.

Once again, her face became a blank mask that needed painting.

The moon looked down upon the face of that same pitiful woman, locked within a concrete prison padded for her own protection. Of all the faces over the years, hers was the most memorable. Most nights, she would look up with adoration, her eyes burning with what almost looked to be worship. On others, she would cry, screaming unintelligible words from miles below. But some nights, she would stare transfixed with eyes full of hate darker than the nighttime void. On these occasions, the moon hid behind a curtain of clouds, terrified of those empty eyes that overflowed with malice. On these nights the moon fled, casting a shadow on the world below.

