

*Author M/M's*

**Halloween**

**Contest**

**E-book**

**2009**

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*Author MMs*

**Halloween  
Writing Contest  
2009**

**By**

**David Deal Jr.**  
{Winner 2009!}

Kelly Winters

Mr. Faust

Blanche Conley

Darah Wood

&

Danpiru

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CREATED AND PUBLISHED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

**Winners of the 2009**  
Author MM's  
Halloween writing contest.

**1st Place**

Bag Snatchers  
by  
David Deal Jr.  
Nashville, NC

**2nd Place**

Coffins  
by  
Reeser  
Groveport, OH

**3rd Place**

My Smile Stays Plastered  
by  
Mr. Faust

**4th Place**

The Decision  
by  
Blane Shea  
Ruther Glen, VA

## **5th Place**

The Chest  
by  
Darah Wood  
Blue Jay, CA

~ ~ ~

## **Honorable Mentions**

Melancholy Meltdown  
by  
Danpiru  
CA

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The Chest by Darah Wood

Melancholy Meltdown by Danpiru

## **A Note from** *Author MM*

My first Halloween contest was a resounding success; the contest and participation has continued to grow each year! Thanks too all those who took time out of their day to write and submit a short story this year. You are the best and you make the contest worth while, thank you.

This year I must thank Mike and Horrorfind.com as the by far the best Halloween Writing Contest sponsor to date. Mike sent me a box of prizes that has surpassed the generosity of all others by light years. It is frightful how large the prize packages are this year!

Each piece is unique and Team DPe and I had a hard time judging. You will note this by the great entries submitted and the winners chosen. Each day is a gift, squander it not and you will gain more than profit by doing so...

Slay on... slay on!!!

*Author MM*

# The Stories

# **Bag Snatchers**

by

**David Deal Jr.**

## Part One: The Man Of Steel

The Man Of Steel quickened his pace. Although it was only 7:00 and still light out, he knew that he might as well head home. The nylon sack he carried was overflowing with candy, a much better haul than he'd expected. Even though little Billy Jenkins had objected when his mother had brought home a Superman costume for him to wear, he had to admit the sack full of candy was worth it.

He was just turning onto Fourth when he heard footsteps behind him. Peeking back around the corner, he spotted a group of boys walking towards him. Tommy Donaldson and his goons, Jeff and Skeeter. Wannabe gangsters. Bullies.

"*Biiiiiiiiilly*," he heard Tommy call. "*Biiiiiiiiilly!* What you got there?"

Billy made a run for it. He'd barely made it 30 feet when the gang overtook him. Jeff knocked him to the ground and easily pinned his arms. Skeeter took Billy's bag of candy out of his hands as Tommy stood back and laughed. *Typical*, Billy thought, *let your goons do your dirty work.*

"Damn, Billy," Tommy said as he took the bag, "What kind of bag is this? It's a freakin' suitcase."

"My Mom gets them from the store," Billy choked out, trying to save himself from a few punches. "I figured it would be strong enough to hold a lot of candy."

"A fine idea," Tommy mocked, "You got a good haul tonight, and to show our appreciation for all this candy, we're not gonna mess you up tonight. Hope the other kids thought to use these bags, boys. Might make taking all this candy to the clubhouse easier. See ya around, Billy."

"Yeah, Billy, see ya around," said Skeeter, "and don't tell Mommy and Daddy about this, or we *will* mess you up next time. Got that?"

With one more shove into the bushes, Tommy and his goons headed off. Billy stood up and watched them walk away, knowing with shame and anger that he couldn't stop them. He looked at his costume and wished just once that he could be Superman, so he could bring justice to Tommy and his goons. *Someday*, thought Billy, *you'll get what you deserve.*

## Part Two: The Justice League

*I can't tell Mom and Dad. I gotta figure something out.*

Billy didn't want to go home. They'd notice if he came back empty handed. But he didn't want a beating at the hands of Tommy's goons either, and his parents would make him talk. What to do?

*If I could find another bag, I could go to a few more houses. If I could get a little bit of candy, I can fool 'em. Tell them it was a slow night. They'll believe that.*

He was only a few blocks away from his friend Joey's house. If Joey was home already, maybe he could sneak a bag out of the kitchen for him. And if Joey was any kind of friend, who knows, maybe he would give him a few pieces of candy to help out. Breaking into a run, Billy headed for Joey's house.

A few houses up from Joey's, Billy caught sight of some kids on the sidewalk ahead. As he crept forward, he recognized a few of the voices. *Mike and Jimmy, for sure. Is that Joey?*

"Mike? Jimmy? Is that you?" Billy called. "What are you guys doing?"

"Hey, Billy," responded Jimmy, dressed in an Incredible Hulk costume. "Man, it looks like Tommy and his goons got you too, huh?"

"What? They got you guys too?", replied Billy, shocked.

"Yep," replied Joey, "they got every kid in the neighborhood. They jumped me coming home. They got Jimmy and Mike coming down Elm. You know Mark and Thomas over on Sixth? Got them, too."

Mike yanked off his Robin mask. "Not only that, they got Angela, Alisha and Leslie, too! My sister and her friends! What kind of punks attack little girls? Somebody needs to go over there and kick their asses!"

The boys all nodded. Mike was right, of course, but none of them was big and strong enough to fight the teenagers. None of them had any older friends. They couldn't go to their parents for help, telling on Tommy and his goons would only cause more beatings.

"I've got it!" yelled Mike. "My dad!"

"No way," said Billy. "I know your dad's a cop, but if he goes knocking on Tommy's door, they'll kill us when they see us."

"No, not *tell* my dad. I mean we should *listen* to my dad. Jimmy, you remember what my dad said. He wanted us to go trick-or-treating together because there's strength in numbers!"

"Yeah, but wha...." Billy began.

"It's not too late. We can round up all the kids. Everyone that got their bags snatched and anyone else that wants to help. Get everyone, and let's go get our candy back." Mike was practically bouncing now.

"We can't fight those guys. They're bigger than us. They'll kill us. We might be dressed like superheroes, but we're not. We'll get our butts kicked."

"Look Billy," Mike said, "They jumped us and stole our candy. They jumped my sister and the other girls, stole their candy, too. And that's just tonight. Think about all the crap they dish out. We always say they deserve to get what's coming to them. So what do you say? Let's give it to them."

Billy nodded, looked up, eyes wide open and muttered one simple word.

"Yeah."

Mike pumped his fist. "Get everybody. Meet a block up from Tommy's house in twenty minutes. Tell them to bring what they can. Bats, sticks off the ground, anything. And bring extra bags too. We're getting our candy back tonight."

With a high five and a sense of purpose, the four boys ran off to assemble their very own Justice League. Tonight, justice would be served.

### Part Three: The Battle Between Good And Evil

Tommy, Jeff and Skeeter were sprawled out on the couch and chair in Tommy's clubhouse. They were miserable.

"Man," Skeeter moaned, "I'm never having chocolate and beer together again. My stomach is killing me."

Tommy lifted his head. "Dude, *I'm* gonna kill you if you puke on my couch. If you're gonna hurl, take it outside."

Skeeter drug himself to his feet. "Stupid kids. It's all their fault, man. If they didn't have all this candy, we wouldn't have had so much to eat. I'm gonna mess up one of 'em tomorrow. You just watch"

"Dude," Tommy mumbled, "You're drunk. Get out before you puke, I'm telling you."

When Skeeter was outside, Jeff started cackling. "That dude is so messed up. He already can't hold his beer. Now he can't even hold chocolate."

"Leave him alone, Jeff. Besides, he's right. I think messing up one of them little brats will make me feel a lot better. What was that kid's name? Jason? The one in the Captain America costume, I'm gonna -"

BOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOM!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Tommy and Jeff jumped to their feet as something collided with the clubhouse. Tommy nearly fell over Jeff as he wheeled around, looking for the source of the commotion.

"Dude, what the Hell -"

BOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOM!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

"What the f-"

"Jeff! Go see what that was, man."

"Dude, what the-"

"Go check it out!"

"No need to come outside!" called a voice from the darkness. "We're coming in. Right behind Skeeter!"

Just then, Skeeter came flailing through the door. He took two drunken steps and tumbled to the floor. Tommy looked down and saw that Skeeter's face was covered in blood. He was just about to check on his friend when a movement at the door stopped him cold.

"Remember us, Tommy?" Billy stood in the clubhouse door, flanked by Jimmy and Mike. Over their shoulders, they all carried baseball bats.

"Billy!?" stumbled Tommy, "What in the Hell's going on -"

"Enough," said Mike, stepping around Billy. "We came to get our candy back. Skeeter didn't like the idea too much, so we let him have it. Or should I say, we let your clubhouse have it with Skeeter's head."

Tommy glanced at the candy and bags on the table. *They want candy? They jumped Jeff? They beat his head against the clubhouse? They're kids. Three little kids.*

Tommy turned back to the three kids standing by the clubhouse door. His anger was beginning to get the best of him.

"You. Little....Punks. You killed Skeeter? You kids better start running, 'cause I'm gone kill all of you. Do you hear me?"

"Yeah, we hear you," Billy smirked. "Skeeter said the same thing, though. If he couldn't get us, what makes you think you will? Wait, let me guess. Because there's two of you and you're bigger than us? Because we're just three little kids, right?"

Without realizing it, Tommy nodded along in agreement to every question. He and Jeff both took a step toward the boys. Billy moved to the side, leaving the door to the clubhouse open and unobstructed.

"GET HIM!!!!", yelled Billy. Tommy and Jeff fell backwards as one by one, kid by kid, the clubhouse began to fill up with costumed children carrying bats, sticks and rocks. Jeff screamed as the miniature superheros crossed the room in a flash.

Mark dove, driving the handle of his bat into Jeff's stomach. Thomas whipped his bicycle chain across Tommy's face. As each of the screaming bullies fell, the children pounced, kicked them, bit them, pounded them, and finally held the boys down so that Leslie, Mike's sister, could deliver a swift kick to each of the boys crotches.

"Enough," said Billy, "Let 'em breathe, if they can. Let's see what they have to say for themselves. Anything you wanna say, boys?" He listened as he walked over to the table and began sifting through the bags.

Tommy could barely speak. "Don't k-kill us. Take your c-c-candy. We're s-s-sorry. We didn't m-mean it."

Billy pulled a nylon sack from the pile. He turned the bag upside down, letting it's contents spill across the table.

"I'm glad you kept my sack, Tommy. Like I told you, it's strong and sturdy, and it can hold a lot of weight."

Billy held his sack open for the children. One by one, they dropped their rocks inside. Stepping back, Billy began to tie the end of the bag shut.

Billy crouched over Tommy, studied his face and raised the sack high into the air. He took aim at the patch of skin between Tommy's eyes, offered one last smile, and swung as hard as he could. Behind him, Jimmy and Mike gripped their baseball bats and smiled, patiently waiting until it was their turn.

## Part Four: The Aftermath

Billy, Mike and Jimmy were all sitting on Billy's front porch eating candy. Billy had come home the night before with a grocery bag full of candy, his nylon sack much too damaged to continue using. His mother noticed the bag, but when questioned about it, Billy simply answered that the nylon sack turned out to not be as strong as he'd thought. His mother didn't push the issue.

The boys were opening another piece of candy when Billy's father opened door and stepped out onto the porch. He looked upset.

"What's the matter, Dad?", Billy asked.

"Boys? Do you know some older kids named Tommy, Jeff and Steven?"

"Sure, we know 'em." Jimmy answered, "Steven likes to be called Skeeter though. What's up?"

"I'm not sure how to tell you this, but they were all found dead this morning. Apparently, a gang jumped them and beat them to death last night. It's all over the news."

The boys exchanges unworried glances.

"You boys didn't see anything while you were trick-or-treating last night, did you? Anyone suspicious looking?"

The boys shook their heads in unison.

"It's terrible. I'm just glad you boys are alright though, I don't know what we'd do if that had happened to you kids."

"We were plenty safe, Mr. Jenkins", said Mike, "My dad's a cop, and he always says theirs strength in numbers. We all stuck together. Nobody was gonna get over one us last night, no sir."

"Smart thinking, kids. That's the kind of thinking that will keep you safe and out of bad situations like this one."

"Right," said Billy with a smile, "We sure don't want to be involved in something like that."

# **Coffins**

by

**Reeser**

We were passing through a crowded part of the Cornerstone Festival campgrounds when I saw the coffin. I couldn't have told you what a coffin was doing there, but there it was. It lay so unobtrusively in the dry, dusty grass that I almost didn't see it before we turned the corner and it vanished into the twisting neighborhood of tents.

I caught Katelyn's arm. "Look at that. I'm not imagining that coffin, am I?"

Katelyn pushed her short, blonde hair out of her face, and squinted to see what I was pointing at. She must have seen it because she smiled a smile full of sinister glee. Only younger siblings can produce such smiles—younger siblings and Satan's minions, perhaps. The smile wasn't directed at me though, so I felt fairly safe.

"Wow," she shielded her blue eyes. "Let's go over and look."

We wandered off the dusty road and stopped just a few feet outside the campsite. The campers weren't there, but it didn't feel right to wander too far into their space. I could feel the stiff grass bristling under the worn soles of my shoes. It didn't seem to want me walking on it either.

The coffin was old fashioned—low and shaped roughly like a body. *Dracula would sleep in a coffin like that*, I thought. The unfinished wood looked bright and yellow in the July sun, although, like everything at the Cornerstone Festival, it was covered in a thin layer of dust. It seemed to me like it belonged there, the same way that the sagging corduroy couches and inflatable beach animals belonged at their respective campsites.

Certainly this was the most affable looking coffin I had ever seen. Maybe Dracula wouldn't have slept in it after all.

“What do you think it’s here for?” Katelyn asked.

“Maybe these people brought their tents in it.” The lid was open the slightest bit, but I couldn’t see inside. I contented myself with imagining the extra tent spikes or creased blue tarps that might be concealed within. I smirked. “I doubt anyone’s been sleeping in it. Too hot.”

“You don’t know that. There could be someone in there right now!” She looked for a moment like she was tempted to push the lid off and check.

“Right,” I rolled my eyes. “Let’s get going.”

We started back to the path. Katelyn glanced over her shoulder, and adjusted the straps of her bag. She was still smiling. “So, what kind of coffin do *you* want?”

“Hey now! It’s my birthday,” I felt a little childish, making this assertion. “You’re *supposed* to be nice to me.”

“You’re the one reading all the vampire books.”

“So? You read those books, too,” I pointed out. It was one of a few things we had in common, except that my vampires came from Anne Rice and not Stephanie Meyers. “I thought you were implying that I’m getting old or something. You know, ‘happy twenty-first birthday—you’re a year closer to dying’.”

“Twenty-one is kind of old. You never know when you’ll need a coffin.”

I swung my fist at her and she danced out of my reach, spraying tiny pieces of gravel all over the place. She swung back at me, and her knuckles grazed my sleeveless shoulder. Neither of us meant it, but if Mum had been with us, I knew she would have been annoyed.

*Happy birthday! Twenty one is too old to get into scuffles with your younger sisters.*

Of course, it had been years already since both of us had been too old for it. Another birthday wouldn't change that.

Because of the heat, our little fight didn't last long. We fell again to plodding past filthy cars, church vans, and clusters of neon tents. The chains on my black pants rattled like dog tags as I walked. The pants were sticking to the backs of my sweaty knees. If I'd been smarter, maybe I would have worn a less heat-absorbant colour, but black was my favourite and I had a stubborn notion that I would do what I wanted on my birthday, thank you, even if the heat index told me I shouldn't.

I frowned, thinking about coffins. Thinking about *myself* in one. I'd never pictured myself as a corpse, and I tried hard not to conjure too vivid an image. Gently, I touched my arm where Katelyn had hit me. My skin felt hot, and stung in spite of all the sunscreen I'd used. I hugged myself. No, I couldn't imagine being dead. I couldn't imagine *anyone* I cared about being dead.

I dragged my feet in the dust as images of my parents, my brother, and my sisters—all dead—floated through my mind. They were arranged in large, dark coffins, their limbs too stiff to really look peaceful, and all of them wore clothes that they never would have chosen in life. You just couldn't expect other people to dress you as well as you dressed yourself.

"So," Katelyn said, interrupting me before I could visualize further details—like the wrong way they might comb our dad's hair, or the wrong shade of eye shadow they might put on Stacy, our other sister. "Do you think anyone will believe that we saw a coffin here?"

“Probably not.” I couldn’t picture my youngest sister laid out in a coffin, either, and I wished I hadn’t seen the one at the campsite. Had I really thought of it as *affable*? It must have been that deceptive, sunny yellow. “It’s really hot. Do you want to go get a soda?” I asked. My mouth felt dry from the dust, and I didn’t want to think any more about coffins.

Katelyn scrunched up her round, sweaty face. “But I don’t have any money.”

“It’s okay. I’ll buy you one. Don’t worry about paying me back.”

“Okay,” she said. She wiped her brow on her shirtsleeve. “So, what concert are we going to see tonight, anyway? Will I like the band?”

“We’re going to see The Awakening, and I think you might like them. They have a song about vampires.”

“Sounds cool,” she agreed.

We kept on walking through the dust.

# **My Smile Stays Plastered**

by

**Mr. Faust**

*I don't care if I'm poor*

*I don't mind if I'm sick*

*I won't bother to be something I am not*

*All I want is love alone*

Sitting in the park one fall evening at the peak of sunset, Keto was sipping on some warm coffee while watching the sun dive behind the far hills as the bright orb turned into a semi-deformed tea kettle. A bright murky orange color covered the skies above while nighttime started to dawn from the Far East. The clouds were still thick, so the stars were concealed.

Crushing his coffee cup, he tossed it into a nearby trash receptacle and began walking down the path illuminated by the street lamps that started turning on one by one.

On his way down the path, he took a left turn down through the trail heading into the woods. The street lamps in that area had been unkempt for the past few years as the local park committee had cut back on maintenance funding. None the less, it was not blocked off by random tree branches, and it was still a quick shortcut to leave the park. Passing by old trees with bark already peeling off, it was late in the season already, and winter had made its arrival all too early. Stepping on dried leaves just hearing the multiple cracks pop from under the soles of his shoes, the wind started to dive in with some water particles flying right into his face.

Getting deeper down the trail, he saw a small huddled thing sitting off the trail. He looked at the back of what looked like something's black hoodie. Walking towards

the dark thing, Keto wanted to check out on why someone would stay out in the blistering cold this late.

Creeping closer with the dry leaves still cracking under his feet, when Keto tapped on the hoodie's shoulder, the head-covered hood turned around to reveal a relatively young woman with hazel eyes just staring directly at him.

Wondering why the woman was out this late, he slowly asked "Are you okay miss?"

In an instant, their eyes locked on each other very intimately; observing the animal in a sense.

As Keto was mesmerized by her eyes, the young woman quickly picked up something that was concealed underneath the leaves. Cocking a shotgun, she pulled the trigger and was able to get a shot at Keto's side. Falling backwards, he dropped down on his back while gasping for air. Trying to feel his wound, the darkly covered woman got up from where she was sitting and picked up a large tout bag from the ground.

Walking over to her injured victim, she gently caressed his cheeks while positioning his head. Unzipping the bag, she first pulled out a small bottle of Novocain with a clean syringe. Twisting the cap off the bottle, she slowly dipped in the needle of the syringe right into the liquid. Pressing down on the plunger, the tube slowly filled up with the anesthetic liquid. Once full, she positioned the needle right onto Keto's neck, puncturing a vein. She injected the liquid right into his bloodstream. Working its way through, the Novocain did not take too much time to effect the body.

Feeling numb from the waist up, Keto could only mumble while the young woman started to pull out another instrument.

*A fine stainless steel hacksaw with fine sharp teeth.*

Positioning the blade right onto the stretched mark on his neck, she pressed down to see if he could feel anything. He did not scream or flinch, but his eyes had bewildered to what the mad woman was doing with the sharp instrument.

Seeing no loud reaction, she rammed the side of her forearm on the dull side of the blade and was able to do a clean cut through the front half of his neck. Feeling the blade now touch his bone, she started sawing through as the blood started to trickle out of his neck and create a large puddle around them. The saw had cut through the neck bone, and seamlessly through the rest of the flesh, as well as the blade had made contact with the ground, and now Keto's head laid dismembered from the rest of his body. She pulled out a towel from the bag and wrapped it around the disembodied head. Stuffing her instruments back inside, she gently laid the wrapped head along, then zipped up her bag.

Looking quickly around for any present onlookers, she quickly left the decapitated body on the trail and continued walking towards the park exit. She did not tend to care about the blood staining her knees, but her pace stayed swift and quick.

A mother and her son were walking their pet dog down the dark path as the son took pictures of everything he saw with a cheap disposable camera. The flashes from the camera illuminated the shadow covered trees for a few seconds as his hands were highly trigger-happy at the moment.

Going further down the path, the dog happens to start barking at a dark figure with something large hanging of its arm. Coming closer, the dog starts to go mad. When the figure had come close, the mother had to keep the dog in her arms to avoid any bites caused by her pet.

Once the eerie figure had disappeared, she set the dog back on the ground, and all of them had continued walking down the path.

After a couple minutes of walking, their dog started pulling hard on the retracting leash as it had sniffed out something just further ahead. The son decided to come close to his mother's side as the dog plundered into the darkness.

Nothing for a while...

Suddenly, their pet dog had come back to only be mortified by their pet's bloody-smearred mouth. The mother shrieked while the son decided to run up ahead and see what the dog had originally found. Pressing the shot button, a flash quickly illuminated the area, and the mother instantly saw the headless corpse just lying on the ground...

Finally out of the park, the young woman looked both ways before crossing the street and into one of the alley ways between the buildings. In the far distance, she could hear someone scream as it was possible that they had found the corpse she had beheaded.

Stopping behind a large dumpster, she prepped her back up against the side and quickly unzipped her bag. Digging out the wrapped head, she uncovered the head like an early Christmas present, and held Keto's head just in front of her face.

The eyelids were shut with the mouth's bottom lip just dripping down for a moment.

She shook the head a little to get some movement.

“Are you still awake?”

And surely enough, the eyelids had started to slowly lift open.

“What... where, where am I?”

“Just here, with me”

“How come I can't feel my arms, legs, or anything below my neck?”

“I only have your head. I left your body back in the park”

“Well, how am I supposed to live now?”

“You don't need to worry about life anymore, you have me now”

“Are you sure about this?”

“Yes!”

“I guess... I guess I could be happy like this, with you”

“I'm happy too”

The young woman started to hug the head as police lights start to brighten up the alley-way. When two policemen surrounded her, they ordered her to stretch out her arms to unhand her possession. Holding them out, they saw the severed head with a gleaming smile just stretching across its face.

# **The Decision**

by

**Blane Shea**

“MAYBE” the fortune-telling 8-ball said when Ean asked, “Did I make the right decision?” He frowned and set the orb back on his bookshelf between his Snake Encyclopedia and Legends of Witchcraft books. He’d been battling between his good conscience and his bad conscience on this assessment for about two months. His choices were either “YES” or “NO.” He came to a resolution yesterday and told his best friend Brandon of his verdict. “That’s a brave decision,” Brandon said, “...not one I would make, but it’s brave.”

Ean’s spine tingled when he heard Brandon’s point of view. It was a feeling of excitement and anticipation, yet also of fear. He valued his friend’s opinion because Brandon seemed worldly, being older by two years and having gone through several life-changing events for a young man far beyond his age. As he pondered his evaluation, Ean wondered why Brandon wouldn’t have made the same preference.

When evening came, Ean donned his jacket and checked his pockets to ensure he had his wallet and his keys. He wasn’t sure how long he would be gone, but he wanted to be able to get back into the front door if Mom turned in for the night and secured the house. He hadn’t told Mom about his decision because he didn’t want her to worry and fuss...and boy, would she FUSS!

He walked onto the porch, silently closed the door behind him and headed down the road to begin his journey. As he walked on the unpaved path, the anxiety he felt earlier simmered into a slow panic as he approached the meeting place. “What the Hell am I getting myself into?!” he exclaimed into his head. Droplets of perspiration formed on his lip, and his ears reddened with heat. “Can I back out now?” he nervously wondered.

Before he could change his mind he was at the final location. He stared up at the heavy oak door with the ancient doorknob. As he slowly reached for the handle, he remarked that his fist barely covered the tarnished brass. Gingerly, he turned the knob and heard the audible click of the latch give way. He looked to the left and to the right of him to see if anybody would protest, and made his way into the building.

The foyer of the huge place was dark and echoey. He took a few steps onto the tile floor and his footfalls sounded like a gong. He stopped and said meekly, "Hello? It's Ean Hunter – I'm here for the ceremony..." As a few seconds droned on, he heard footsteps rushing toward him. Ean smoothed his jacket, straightened his posture and ran his hand through his hair.

A tall, thin man in a black cloak greeted Ean with a somber face. The teenager gave a small smile, and the thin man nodded and gestured to follow him. They moved swiftly through the winding hallways until they came to a black, doorless archway. Ean stood in front of the silent opening and noticed it was absent of any sound or living presence, much like a painted canvas.

"Are you ready, young man?" the thin man asked in a deep quiet voice as if he didn't want to disturb what was beyond the blackness. Ean looked at him and gave an affirmative, determined look on his face. Again, the man nodded and waved his hand in front of the void, indicating that Ean had come to his ultimate destination.

The man reassuringly put his hand on the lad's shoulder, then turned and walked down the hallway and disappeared around the corner. As the boy stood alone, he pondered the cause and effect of his purpose. Would Mom be disappointed? Would Brandon still

be his friend? How will his choice shape his future? Will he be brave enough to see this through?

Ean faced the archway, took a deep breath and walked into the abyss. As his eyes adjusted to the darkness, he saw the small window on the wall in front of him. He slowly walked over to the porthole, looked out and sighed. A stream of tears fell from his hazel green eyes. This is what he signed up for...this was his decision...it was "YES."

# **The Chest**

by

**Darah Wood**

Nina ran her hands along the chest she had just received. It was one foot wide, two feet long and a little over one foot tall. There were handles and five straps spread equally over the top of it. The wood appeared to be ash or oak, she couldn't quite tell. It reminded her of a pirates chest, actually. There were symbols on it that she could not read very well. They were runes and she had only been studying them for a few months and she didn't even recognize these. They were engraved in the lid and looked really worn down.

The lock was rusted horribly and it didn't have a key, she doubted it would fit anyway. There was no telling just how old this thing was or how it came to her, or even why it did. Clearly, there was something that had to do with her. She looked around the garage and picked up a shovel. One good hit and the lock broke open, hitting the ground with a clank. Rust fell off with the hit of the shovel and the landing on the ground. She moved it away and pulled up the hasp, which appeared to be brass underneath all the rust.

"was this thing in an ocean or something? Bloody hell."

She grunted slightly as the lid came unstuck. She heard the hinges creak and saw rust flakes fall from them. She raised her eyebrows and looked inside. Everything was completely dry inside. She reached in and noticed a space in the lid, clearly a hiding spot for secret things. There was a long, slender box glued into the space, so of course, she had some difficulty getting it off. The lid was nearly ripped off when she looked at it. Inside was a what looked like a wand.

"8 1/2" yew with dragon's claw?' what the hell does that mean?" she studied the piece of wood and recognized it as yew. "must be what this is." she gave it a few waves, not knowing what to expect. Green, red and gold sparks shot out of the tip.

“whoa.” she carefully laid the wand on the ground and looked back into the chest.

There were books that looked older than the trunk. She picked up the book on top and noticed a folded piece of paper tucked into it. It also looked really old and she delicately pulled it out and unfolded it. She raised her eyebrow when she saw her name on the top of the letter.

The letter itself said that she was a decedent of a very powerful wizard and she was the only person in her family to have the powers to use the wand in the roof of the chest.

There was a spell that he cast while he was on his deathbed (he was hanged when he was her age and his wife was pregnant with their first child) that made no other child in his family have his powers until the society was more accepting of magic. The first one to have it after would be destined for very strong power. It was more or less up to her as to how she used these powers if she decided to, though it was suggested she use them for good instead of evil. The books in the chest would help her in the beginning and even after, when she was all powerful.

The wand may not work for her and she would need to make herself one if that was the case(there was a book for that, too). There were some rune books in there, too, so she could learn more than what her current book could teach her, as it mostly for divination.

The rest of the books were all dealing with magic in some way. There was also a rather rusty looking caldron.

Nina lifted the wand and examined it. She opened one of the spell books and thumbed through it, looking for a small spell to do. In time, she found a levitation spell and used it on the family car. She was able to levitate in a few inches off the ground. Rather excited, she looked through the book some more and found one for changing things. All

she had to do was imagine what she wanted to change her subject into (it also worked on humans), point the wand at it and say the spell. So, she changed the car, a minivan, into a blue '70 Falcon, a car she had been dying for. The same spell changed it back, so she changed it back and closed the chest. She then levitated the chest and walked with it to her room. Then, she was able to summon the lock with her and looked at it. She wanted to try to get the rust off of it and use it for the chest.

The letter also said that it'd be good to shrink the books or enlarge the inside of the chest for other stuff pertaining to magic she may find as well as things she would rather keep secret. She picked up a crystal ball and examined it. Apparently she'd be able to talk to her ancestor whenever she wanted or needed as well as other people like her she may meet. All she had to do was say "speak with" and say their name while thinking of precisely who she wanted to talk to. She decided to take a chance and said, "speak with Lambert" and thought hard about her magical relative. There was a small chime noise and a,

"yes? Are you Nina?"

"yes I am. Are you the wizard I'm related to?"

"yes. You are very lovely."

She thanked him and she was finally able to learn about herself, that she was detained to have his abilities. she wouldn't have gotten the chest or be able to do anything she had done earlier if she hadn't. he wished her luck.

# **Melancholy Meltdown**

by

**Danpiru**

Shifting clouds streaking through the sky, a deep cheery black followed by a jet black. Dead of night colors ripping all around and the screaming souls shatter the peace of slumber. Hot wind burns thy skin, demon eyes look though the sleeper as to give him no rest. A chanting getting louder and louder like a pounding heart racing faster and faster, the blood starts to boil and then BAM! Out of a restless sleep, Tony awoke suddenly sweet pouring down as he feels his heart skip a beat racing from that dream again. Every night for 40 years, this dream comes to him, as it haunts him, never knowing why this dream comes to him. Like many things that he see's from the glimpses of the future that only give him a few moments of time that all he can do is watch. The horror within his dreams could shake anyone, but he feels that it means something. Something he has a charge in and must stay around to see what happens next. Nevertheless, being able to see things one should not be able to see seems to disturb him. And things he dose when dreaming sometimes able to send dreams to people or retrieving them but that only happens from time to time. In addition, this dream seems to stand out from most of the odd dreams. He has the ability to remember all his dreams to the very last moment, except the black dreams which are the future glimpses of what yet to come most of the time it's nothing important but sometimes it's not. Yet not aloud to say anything to warn, it is simply not his job to, only to watch as if a recorder or witness.

After an hour or so, Tony tries to go back to sleep, rolling over and drifting off to sleep returning from where he left so suddenly. The mystic clouds form once again as if a travel tunnel to get to the heart of the dream and find out why the dream forced him out. The deepest darkest red with blacker then black seems to be with him again almost like his power as it swirls around him one clockwise the other counterclockwise like

volcano's of smoke of each color, then starts to look like flames. Like drifting through time, it is always the dead of night in these dreams perhaps to show him a Clairvoyance view of what is to come. Fading back into light the chaos of this dream starts to show once again, the planet is crying out in sheer pain in the 21<sup>st</sup> day of the 12<sup>th</sup> month of this year that ends all years. The earth in line with the sun to the equinox of the galaxy shifts the planets poles to a new location. But as this is happening the neutral shield that pushes back the solar wind is down, and the flames are scorching the surface of the planet people are running as cities are burning, life is dying all around the world leaving nothing left to eat nor water to drink, but steam in its place. All the nations were doing before this was fighting over nothing but greed, if only they could have seen what was coming, maybe this would be different, the fork in the road was there to see. However, we chose not to see, the earth quakes none whom has ever seen ripping holes shredding the surface of the planet. The hot wind of death burning and cooking all life. Super volcanos are erupting in key areas changing the face of our planet forever. Our once blue planet now more like mars empty and starting over in the cycle of life. However, not with life as we know it. A new life, maybe one that will respect its home better until the next equinox in 25,800 years when the poles switch back and a new life forms from that change in History. Now the mystic cloud forms once again as if to show another possible course or path that could have been taken.

The mist clears a few years before this end comes, where the signs are showing and we see it as global warming caused by our technology or so we think. We as of a life form has always seen things at face value and not the whole picture. Perhaps if we

looked at everything first there would be fewer problems in the world. Dreaming at best, but if we chose to live through this we must act and act now before time runs out. Tho, if this pole switch happens all our technology on the planet will stop working and we would have to reinvent under the new laws of physics. We could try to make a shielding system to shield the planet, or dig huge underground cities. Nevertheless, where a best place to be during an earthquake? In the sky until it is over, well the same could be said with this event coming and that it is not in our control from stopping it from happening. We need a new type of an ark to save us from ourselves and this will cost to make it happen. To save 40% of the population we will need 15 large arks for space travel or one supper huge space ship. We will have to start building now! Alternatively, make a very large moon base and ship people there but that would mean only 25% of the population could be saved. It is still in our power to save us if we are willing to do this. However, as its running now we will go blindly in to the deep dark sea to our doom before we lesson to the past and the profits that gave us this warning from many nations no longer here. What path will we take, one leads to life and the other will lead to death. Dream ends.

**This ebook brings you the best and winning entries of  
The Author MM's Halloween Writing Contest 2009.**

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