

FIRST EDITION

November 2012

Welcome to *Theseus Publishing's* first online magazine. Home to a variety of Fantasy and Sci-Fi stories.



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What's Unique To This Edition?

This month our magazine has been ghoulished with the spooky addition of

**HALLOWEEN HORROR
FLASH FICTION**

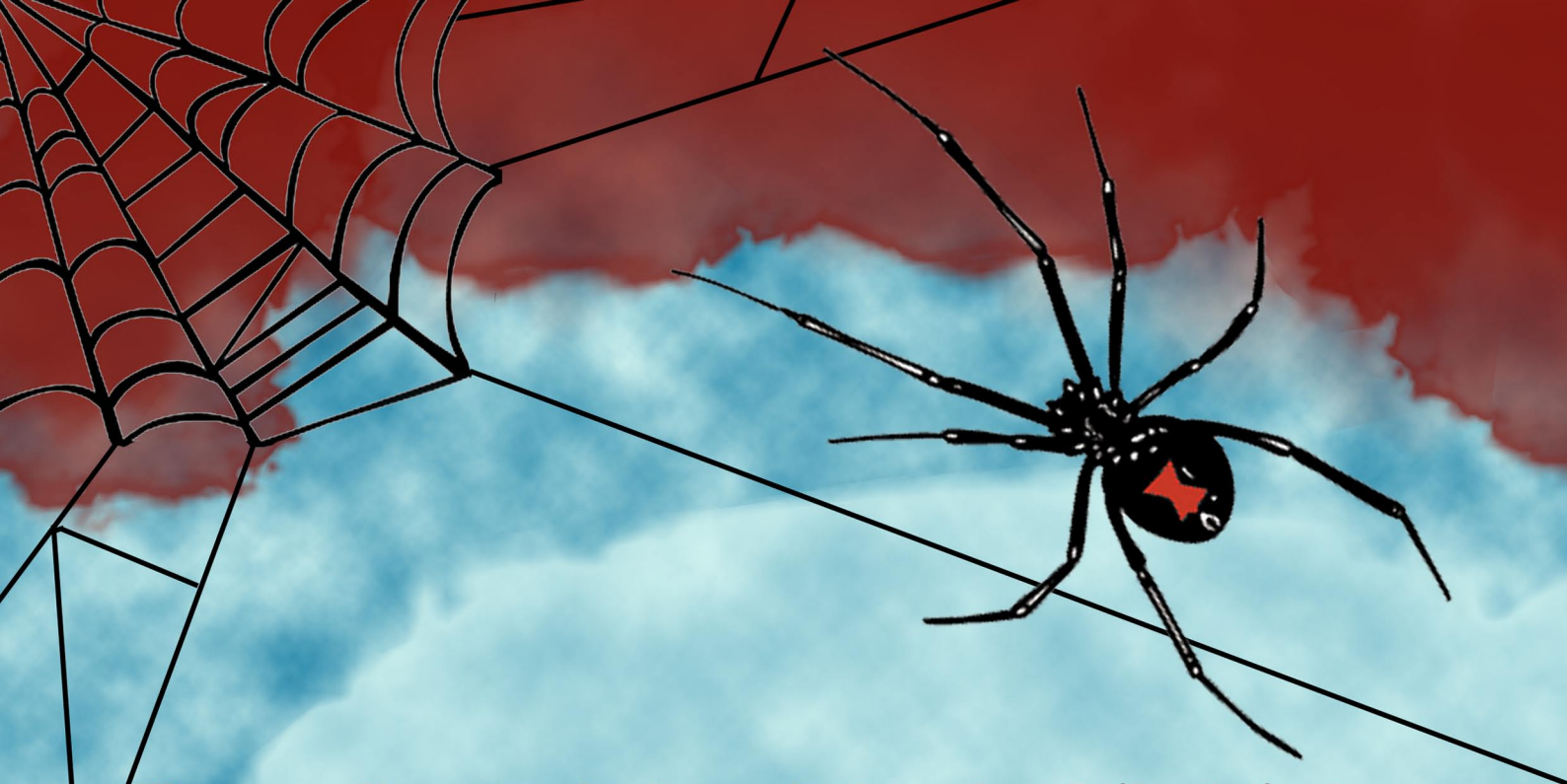
Dare you read on?

*Contributing
Writers:*
Various
(see inside)

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This month, we asked people to submit flash fiction under the theme of "Halloween Horror".

We have chosen some of our favourites and hope you enjoy reading! Please leave any feedback with us at

theseuspublishing@gmail.com

and the best comments will be featured next issue!



CAUTION

Some of the following content may not be suitable for younger readers.

Ash by Jennifer Button.

My brain fuzzes back into life again. The ever-increasing drip of sodden leaves against musted soil is the first noise my ears encounter. Memory still muddled I almost fail to realise that it had also been the last noise I had heard before being spun into darkness.

Drip.

I'm on my back, but how or where I'm not sure. As I strain to sit up my limbs give way and I feel exhausted. They refuse to do what I ask of them, and with a great sigh I fall back.

Drip.

The dripping water has begun thudding onto my forehead. I feel it collecting there in a sealed bubble. My eyes are unfocused, and can only pick up the surrounding darkness that swallows me up. The moons are the only beacons my eyes train in on. Two moons? The dizziness in my mind is starting to play tricks on me.

Drip.

I'm in a forest I'm sure of it. Though I can't remember how I got here. Mother had always told me not to use the dark forest's pathway at night. But it has always been the quickest way home, and my head had been throbbing so much at the party. But... I don't even remember leaving the party.

Drip Drip.

I reach around me for clues, feeling nothing but the crisp warmth of the ground. I catch a clump of the earth, warm, dusty and dry. Like fine pieces of sand the grains of earth scatter through my fingers, and quickly join back to their home soil.

Wait a minute. If the ground is dry, then what...

Drip Drip.

The surrounding darkness has begun closing in on me. I can hear my breath catching in my throat, ragged and unsure of itself. I allow my hand to stray to my forehead. It hones in on the air-tight pool that grows there. I try to imagine the iciness of the water against my skin and my breath shudders. My hand finds only warmth. Disturbing the pool's surface causes it to panic and it begins to escape in coarse droplets down my face.

Drip Drip.

That's when the rusted smell hits my senses and causes my brain to swirl down into the base of my skull. That hauntingly familiar metal smell, that can only be associated with child-hood memories of scuffed knees and cut fingers.

Drip Drip.

Finding whatever strength I have within me I manage to hurl myself up onto my elbows and scan the black. The two moons continue to bare down on me.

Suddenly startled by it all, I stagger up, trying to secure my feet into the soft, dusty soil. The dripping is all around me.

Drip Drip Drip.

Senses numbed I stumble forward with outstretched hands. All around me the trees seem to be weeping crimson. The forest is bleeding.. Why is the forest bleeding?

Drip Drip Crunch.

And those moons, those big ashen moons. Why do they increasingly resemble eyes stalking my every move?

Bacon by Stephen Hewitt

He could smell the aroma from all the way upstairs, he felt a sense of euphoria as he realised what was he was about to receive. He sprang from his bed and ran towards the door, reaching out towards the chrome handle he pulled with great force and the door popped open with a loud clicking sound. He sprinted as fast as his legs would take him down the spiral staircase and jumped into the kitchen. There it was, a beautiful sight, he felt exhilarated, almost overwhelmed at what was waiting for him. As he glared down at his sandwich, Johns lips moistened in anticipation, his taste buds tingled with excitement, as if he could already taste the juicy, salty bacon sliding along his tongue and down the back of his welcoming throat.

He noticed the bread had been toasted, as small crispy flakes fell from the crust, this was the way he liked it, John felt toasted bread was an essential part of a delicious sandwich and this increased his excitement further, he reached across the smooth counter and grabbed his favourite condiment, brown sauce. His hands were shaking as he tried to frantically unscrew the bottle cap, eventually it was undone, and he lifted up the top piece of toasted bread with great care, he was anything but careful with the brown sauce as it gushed out to immerse the meat of the sandwich, the crispy crunchy bacon. Three rashers sat playfully atop the bread, almost tauntingly as Johns lips glistened with saliva. When he was satisfied he slowly pressed the bread together and almost moaned in pleasure as he witnessed the sauce ooze from the edges of the perfectly cooked bacon sandwich. He lifted the sandwich towards his open mouth and sunk his teeth into the sandwich, the crunchy texture combined with the myriad of flavours sent him into a state of pure bliss.

Just when he thought it couldn't get any better, he took a second bite into this slice of heaven he called a sandwich. Again the flavours combined beautifully as he wondered how it could taste this good. He decided to find his mother so that he could thank her for this culinary masterpiece, but as he walked into the living room he saw a sight which will be engrained within his brain for the whole of eternity. John's mother was strewn across the floor, with her flesh stripped from her, lying in her own blood. John swiftly dropped his sandwich, with the realisation this wasn't bacon at all.

Gazing at his face nestled against the crumpled pillow she could understand why those young naïve women had fallen for him. A strong jaw line, chiselled nose and a faint trace of a nine o'clock shadow just appearing along the angle of his cheek. As the light from the Jack 'o' Lantern cast flickering shadows along his hair line, his long lashes fluttered briefly as a furrow masked his perfect features, only marred by the masking tape pulled tight over his mouth.

Reaching over his naked chest, she checked the wrist restraints. A quick tug. Yep. Secure. Manoeuvring down the bed, balancing on her heels, she checked his ankles too. They too were immovable.

Laughing to herself, she rose up onto her toes and drew up to her full height above him. The metal bed rocked and creaked as she changed her position. Straddling his prone body she rubbed the backs of her calves briefly, her long fingers working the straining muscle. As her eyes followed his contours she acknowledged the magnificent artwork inked into his chest. The head of a wolf baring its teeth was beautifully worked. Its fangs complete with dripping blood.

She thought back to the bite marks on the women that had come into the refuge. Sadistic slits rendered through their flesh as this monster had subjugated them into submission. He had them fearing for their lives, but too afraid to leave him as he had systematically annihilated their routines making them reliant on him for everything. A typical bully and woman hater.

It had been easy really to add the Rohypnol into his drink. No one as cocky as him would even consider that there were other predators around, stalking for their next victim. Unlike him, however, she picked only the deserving.

Halloween was always a treat. She would spend months preparing for the right victim. Checking for accuracy, stalking them and preparing the perfect evening of fun. Well, for her anyway. This particular individual deserved everything he got.

A movement beneath her brought her back to the present. His long lashes parted and he stared at her with dazed brown eyes. She had not given him too much of the date rape

drug, just enough to get him safely bound down. She wanted him very much awake and aware whilst she worked on him.

“Good Evening,” she smiled, revealing her elongating teeth to good effect. She watched him as he shook his head from side to side to clear his vision, sure that what he was seeing was just a trick of the light. His eyes then quickly took in her naked lithe body straddled above him. The hungry glint in his eye however, quickly turned to fear as he noticed the sharpness of her fingernails as they trailed along his chest, the light from the pumpkin reflecting off their sharp edge.

He desperately rolled his body from side to side as his predicament became increasingly clear. He could feel his flesh parting on his chest as the pain of the lacerations sparked clearly in his head, washing away the last of the drug.

With a final flourish, she ripped away the wolf's head tattoo from the rest of the flesh on his chest. Holding it above him, it dripped with his own blood onto his forehead. Then, she slowly opened her lengthening jaws and dropped the tattoo into her mouth, biting down with relish.

His stunned gaze took in the hair sprouting from her face and hands, her body twisting and wrenching into an altogether different shape. Her tongue slowly licked around her teeth and from within this totally canine feature came a voice which was the last thing he would ever hear.

“This bitch bites back!”

Finally, with exquisite precision, she gently nuzzled his genitals. Salivating in anticipation her fangs gripped him tenderly, almost kindly. He couldn't help it. Even in his predicament he rose to the occasion.

With an inhuman laugh, but mostly howl of pleasure her teeth bit down through the soft firm flesh. As she ripped his most precious part away from him, he bucked and wretched against the bed, the metal squeaking and pinging around him.

The darkness came quickly, his senses overloaded, refusing to work. Above him he felt her tongue licking what remained of his groin. The sensation was exquisite.

The Night of Her and Him by Danielle Davies

She stood pressed against the wardrobe completely paralysed by fear. Every breath echoed around her, and she was convinced that this simple yet unstoppable force would give away her position. It's not that he wouldn't find her. Of course he would. His sense of smell conquered that of a band of hunting dogs - though he could eliminate them and ten more in a heartbeat.

That's another thing that could give her away - her heartbeat. Or was that what drew him in? That dull yet forceful pounding that kept her breathing those same terrified breaths. She felt the hairs prick up on the back of her neck, and before she could turn to scream, he was on her.

His strength was unlike any she had ever encountered, she felt crushed within a second, and all he was doing was holding her left arm. It all appeared to happen so fast...and yet so slow, that she witnessed everything that was happening to her as if no time had passed at all. She saw the veins in his face stand out as his teeth became fangs. He tightened the grip on her arm, and moved his face to her shoulder as if he were going to kiss her.

Suddenly, she felt a stab in her neck, worse than any doctor's needle, as she fell to the floor in shock. He did not loosen his grip as they fell together in perfect time. She could feel her life force being drained out of her. The experience was almost sexual in a way. She loathed him, this...demon, whose sole purpose was to pursue her and use her. Yet part of his general essence made a tiny part of her scream in pleasure. But it was all an illusion. In reality, she was in such writhing, seething pain. She felt as if her skin was going to loosen as her blood disappeared. She screamed so loud that her vocal cords ceased to exist. And she wanted to moan so hard, as if any other erotic encounter would never compare. But why was she thinking that? He was hurting her.

She was almost glad the end was near. But then, he stopped. He turned her head, his black empty eyes staring into her own. A drop of blood fell from his mouth and into hers. He laughed as she stared helplessly in his grasp.

"That's all you need...one drop." He muttered, as she finally regained her voice,

"You...you've been hunting me for weeks, why not just kill me?"

"Oh, you see love, I don't want to kill you. I want you to walk with me...forever."

The thought of being like...him...repulsed her. She struggled to break free, her wrists felt like they were about to break from the pressure.

"No...Please!"

He smiled,

"But you see, you have no choice in the matter. It's already done."

"What? How? I'm not...I'm not...d...d...dead?!"

"Now you are, see you tomorrow, love."

He snapped her neck.

Sinister Review

So, I finally worked up the courage to...at the age of 20...go and see my first horror movie in the cinema. Safe to say, I was absolutely terrified as I anxiously hid under my hoodie as the trailers began next to my boyfriend and his friend, feeling like the biggest wuss to grace the Earth. The trailer for *Sinister* had terrified me, as anything that could make me jump...well...will.

Take what you want from it, it probably isn't that scary. But yeah, the film itself. I'd say it was jumpy in points and the storyline is potentially ok at the beginning.

A writer who has become obsessed with his dream of writing another best seller "real crime" book moves into a house where 4 murders and a child abduction took place, unbeknownst to his wife and 2 children. The writer proceeds to find a box of "Home Videos" in a box in the attic, which detail rather creepy family murders over the past few decades, where all family members have been killed but one child is always missing from the picture. He later finds other clues such as drawings and finds a series of links between the many murders. There are also links to a Pagan god named "Boogal" nicknamed "The Boogie Man" in the child-like drawings left on the box, which created an image of fear for me at least!

I know I said "spoilers" in the title but I won't tell you anymore, as you'll have to watch it yourself. Personally, I found the beginning to be pretty good, but as the movie continued, I got pretty bored and I found myself waiting for a huge finale end scene that was like OMG WOW, but in fact it was pretty dull and predictable.

So, overall I'd give *Sinister* a: 5/10





So, as some writers may know, November is National Novel Writing Month - known by many as NaNoWriMo! The aim is to get budding novelists to write 50,000 words in a month (approx 1667 words a day) whilst being motivated by other writers to help reach their goal. In this issue, I list my top tips for succeeding in NaNoWriMo as I too, am participating. Enjoy!

1. Quantity over Quality

50,000 words in a month? Doesn't that sound like the most daunting thing EVER? Well fear not! What you write in NaNoWriMo is merely a first draft, it isn't going to be a masterpiece, it's just about getting the ideas onto paper. Don't worry if it doesn't flow, or if the spelling/punctuation/grammar isn't perfect, just calm down, write and focus on your total. Do not worry about the quality. This links to...point 2!

2. Turn your Inner Editor off!

Are you a perfectionist like me, and always want to make sure everything is the best it can be before continuing? STOP. This is why most novels don't get completed! I will say again, THIS IS A FIRST DRAFT. Don't read it back, it'll just make you want to change things. Just write, write, write and don't stop to worry about little things. Get your editing part of your brain and tell it to shut up and take a rest for a month.

3. Get your Nanokit ready!

A Nanokit you say? What is this? Well, what helps you write? Food, music, soft drinks, tea? Alcohol (naughty, naughty.) Get these things ready with you for when you write, it'll help keep you motivated and will be a means of rewarding yourself when you meet your daily target. Personally I like to sit in a pair of lounge pants, have a cup of tea and eat a hell of a lot of chocolate pretzels. But whatever floats your boat...

4. Join the Site!

www.nanowrimo.org is the official site for NaNoWriMo. Here, you can develop author and novel information as well as update your word count as much as you like to see how well you are doing. There are also forums where you can talk to other writers about progress, ideas and any tips you may need or want to share. I also found this Twitter account @nanowordsprints very useful, as there is nearly always a sprint going on to help you write fast, with some prompts as ideas. Both sites have helped me so much! And last but not least...

5. Enjoy!

Seriously, this is the most important point. Even if you don't reach your total, you can still spend a month talking to fellow writers and playing around with some writing techniques and plot ideas. If you're not having fun with your writing, then what's the point? If your story feels dull, do something silly to make you laugh. Kill a character off in a silly way, make a random event occur. You can always delete it later in your second draft, but if it keeps you writing, do it! So sit back, get your Nanokit ready and have fun and good luck!

Tasha, (Tasha360 on NaNoWriMo - 13,006 words on time of writing 7/11/12 - Short Encounters)



This weeks featured short story is The Impossible Woman by Lewis Christian. It is a sci fi short story and we think it is amazing, we hope you enjoy!

The Impossible Woman by Lewis Christian

Barbara Moon is the single most important being in the entire universe, it's true. She's even more important than God, albeit slightly less famous.

Each day passes and each wrinkle tightens. She sits alone in her caravan, casually orbiting the planet Moonshine, waiting for the kettle to boil for the billionth time as she clutches a biro in one hand and countless papers in the other. She just sits, second-fiddle to God, get slaves away doing all the work, spending 99.83% of every waking hour manually documenting the universe.

Nobody visits, nobody calls, but she gets on with it because she has to, because nobody else will.

Meanwhile, just beyond the gravity belt of Moonshine, there's a stool down the local pub with God's name on it and a leaning tower of graffitied beer mats full of new ideas for planets and beings, the sum total of his contribution to the universe he once proudly created. Beer mats, he concluded, were ideal because they 'both held beer and also fit nicely into an envelope with no prior folding required unlike the awkwardly-sized A4. Hence, by 'countless papers' earlier, I actually meant a stack of soggy beer mats. It was no wonder her home was frequented by confused alcoholics. In any case, though, they provided Barbara with a much-needed laugh throughout her heavy routine.

She zimmered on over to the kitchen for a brew, black coffee, her favourite. Reaching for her mug, she felt every bone in her body crack. She was so old now, and was mere days from retirement. Blacking out each day on her calendar made her smile grow wider - she couldn't wait to just sit back and relax. In an odd sort of way, however, she knew deep down she would miss her job. After all, this was all she had ever really known. After worrying about the potential boredom of retirement she was scared half to death and so, from that day forth, she decided she'd never do that again. Instead, in between drawing up new galaxies and hammering out some timelines, she had started to plan her own future.

First, she would move out. She deeply adored her caravan as it'd been her safe haven for the last seventy-four years but it was time to move on, to leave her old lifestyle behind. Barbara mapped out her own gorgeous little cottage and garden in the south of a little country called England far across the universe on the famous Blue Planet. Of all matter she'd created under God's orders, Earth was her proudest achievement - such diversity, and such beauty. Everything would be perfect there, with her elegant furnishings and the old wood-beamed ceilings she'd always desired. And actual proper walls with actual proper rooms separated by actual proper doors. All that complete with a lush acre of surrounding greenery and wide-open fields. Though she'd once designed heaven and knew it was just amazing, this little cottage was her personal idea of heaven.

Unfortunately, this dream would never become reality.

Instead, Barbara woke one morning to the sound of her alarm combined with her kitchen flying around the living area and her wardrobe slowly edging its way out of the gaping hole where her front door once hinged. Our moon was one small step for man, and one giant leap for mankind. But, for Barbara, it was just another component in the epic outer-space pinball machine her caravan hit as it hurtled its way tow-bar first through several galaxies, a wormhole and towards Earth.

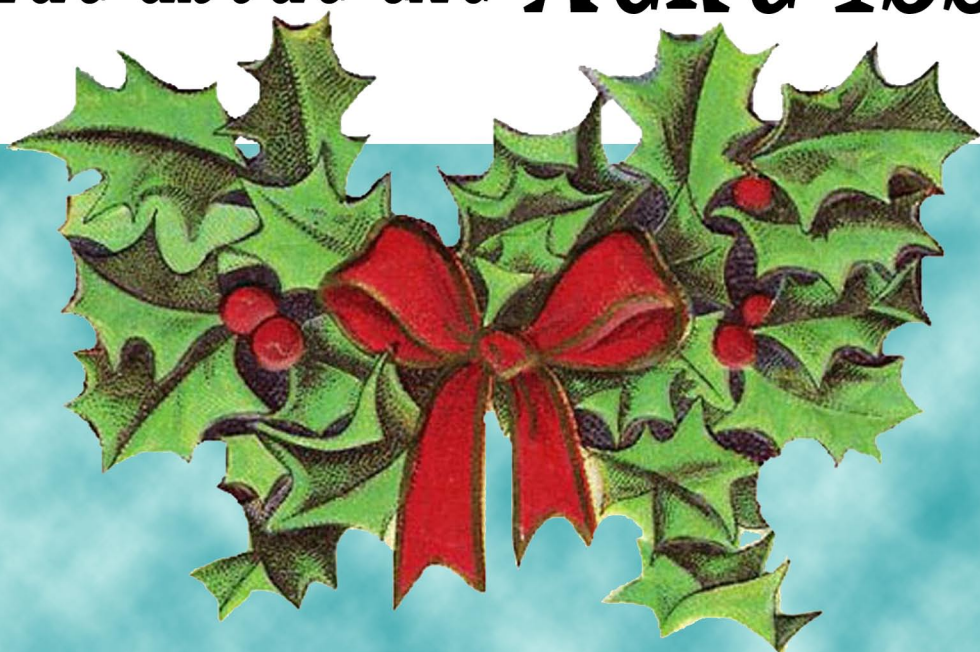
It looked as though a bomb had hit, a harrowing sight. For miles around, scattered remains of this old woman's life now lay, absolutely nothing could be salvaged. Except memories. Somehow, rather amazingly, this fragile woman had survived everything - beaten away death with her magical old walking stick I suspect - and survived the impossible.

Seven billion people in this world and, to this day, not one of them believes it. Not really, anyway - she's just a story to them. I guess even I can't believe it, not really, but I have to. I have to because when I visited this incredible woman at her deathbed she told me so many amazing and impossible stories, including this one - her final story - and then she also told me of her loneliness. For seventy-odd years, she'd been so very alone, floating in the endless vacuums of space.

Nobody visited, nobody called, and nobody believed her.

Except me.

*And what about the **Next Issue?***



Christmas Flash Fiction!

More info will be available soon at

*[www.theseuspublishing
.weebly.com](http://www.theseuspublishing.weebly.com)*



Until Then.