

Spooky short story

1/11/2020

I shivered. The Skulard house looked creepier here than it did on Forever Street. I glanced around, wondering if I shouldn't just head back home and snuggle in with some hot chocolate in front of a blazing fire and watch TV. But then I remembered; I was the big sister. I had to go and get the ball. I took a deep breath, and pushed the gate open.

Nothing happened.

'See,' I whispered to myself. 'Nothing there. No werewolves, no bottles of poison...' Even though I knew that ghosts couldn't be real, it was harder putting one foot in front of the other now. I suppose that the house would have looked pretty, back in the day. But now the murky brown paint was peeling off the walls, the once gleaming doorknobs were rusty, and thistles were taking over the garden. Not nice thistles, either. No beautiful purple flowers bursting joyously from the top. These were brownish grey weeds, and nothing was beautiful about them.

Suddenly and surprisingly, a ginger cat streaked out the front door. This pleased me for a second, because the cat didn't look scary at all, and perhaps someone still lived there, but then my heart seemed to drop out of my chest. The warm summer's night suddenly felt ten times colder. Something must have frightened that cat.

I tried to calm down. All I needed to do was get a ball. I was at the door now. Now was the time to decide.

The door creaked and swung open without me pushing it. I peeked inside, making *absolutely* sure that my neck wasn't showing. I wasn't taking any chances. There wasn't a light switch. The only source of light was a fire, just like the one I had imagined back in the garden. But it was not like any fire I had ever seen. It had a menacing air about it, and it had bright, fluorescent green flames dancing eerily around the edges of the fireplace. It took me a while to realise that if the fire was lit... someone had been here very recently. And as far as I knew, the only inhabitant was a small, ginger cat, and cats couldn't light fires. Unless, it wasn't really a cat. Something howled behind me and I froze, like a deer in headlights.

The ball fell, bouncing on each step, knocking over a mouldering, china patterned vase on the way, and I caught it. The only problem was, someone (or something) was moving upstairs.

I turned, and backed slowly away. The cool garden wind whipped my hair as a cloaked figure on the doorstep screamed,

'Give up. You cannot win. SYMAN!'

The ginger cat hissed in the bushes. It was getting taller. It arched its back. It no longer was an adorable, fluffy, ginger cat. The gnarled trees waved their leafless branches. I ran. I ran until I thought it would get me. As soon as I felt that it was all useless, that the man would get me, I reached our front door. I fumbled with the keys and collapsed on the sofa. I told Grandma my story. She believed me, and I drank hot chocolate in front a blazing fire, snuggled down watching TV.

So if your ball goes over the fence, don't ever step foot in the Skulard house on the street of Forever.

Harriet