

A collection of short stories that catches one in between sanity and the blessing of insanity. Short stories of intrigue and mystery intertwined with reality and mental blindness. Please read during the light of day and the presence of others.

Beyond the door with no knob

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BEYOND THE DOOR WITH NO KNOB

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A TIME IN A MOMENT

The rows of trees beside the lane were some elms and four cedars. I set in my automobile looking up the lane to the knoll where the old church stands leaning to the right and to the rear. I have heard of the old church for years and the stories the locals would tell of unusual happenings on the grounds and within the old building.

As I pass the last cedar tree, I hesitate once again knowing if what has been told is true then now would be the time to turn and leave, I continue. The yard around the church is well maintained and closely cropped by some one of the village below and south by some two miles. I stop but not to close for fear the old church could collapse at any time.

I leave the security of my automobile and walking to the front of the sedan, I lean on the fender and look at and beyond the church to the rear. A small cemetery to the left contains no more than forty places of rest as I had been told. No outlandish markers were seen but rather very discreet slabs of granite filled the solemn place of rest. A few stones of various sizes also marked graves of those in the pass who could not afford more than the stones of the field for an indicator of their place of rest.

I have been told that another dimension surrounds this old place of worship, a dimension that interrupts the normal time and brings the past back if only in memory. I stand looking for a starting point as to my experience as no doubt others had, and as others have in the past I wait for that moment in time and space. Nothing happens.

I feel completely ignorant as I turn in a complete circle and return facing the old church, which is still leaning as if at rest. I turn and look down the lane and suddenly realize that the

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last two cedar trees seem not as large as before. Of course I am elevated on the knoll and therefore would be more above the cedars than I would be coming up the lane. Easily explained, I turn back to the church and it is no longer leaning and my knees go weak.

A voice so deep it resonates, my very soul speaks asking if I was here for the funeral. I spin so quickly to my rear I almost land on it. In front of me stands a man of moderate height with broad shoulders. On his left shoulder he carries a shovel and a pick. I turn to lean on my sedan and almost fall once again. My source of transportation is not there. I look around and the gentleman speaks to me in a deep calm voice: "Sir I am sorry I frighten you much didn't know you were blind." I back away from him and stop. He again apologizes and still lost for words, I explain to him I am not blind but startled by his sudden appearance. He apologizes again for his quietness and asks me again if I am here for the funeral.

Ok If this is a prank I will play along. I say yes and I presume you are the grave digger. He replies have been for going on twenty years. As he walks toward the small cemetery he speaks over his shoulder and says: "I must get busy funeral in two hours."

I turn once again to my sedan and it is still not there! I turn in the direction of the church and suddenly realize my time in the dimension has begun. Whether to run down the lane or stay is not a choice. I take that first hurried step as I hear a pick hit a rock and looking over my shoulder, I realize it might be too late as all I can see of the grave digger is his shoulders and head.

I make it to the first cedar tree when I hear the distinct sound of horses' hooves coming from the direction of the village, and I quickly hide behind the last cedar. I could have

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sworn this cedar was bigger at the base but I intend to use it for a hiding place regardless.

Along with sound of hooves the creak of wagon wheels and then the sound of shuffling feet can be heard. I peek from around my hiding place and I can see an old antique horse drawn funeral coach approaching and turning into the lane followed by the bereaved. Trying to breathe normally, I watch as they pass. The old parson leading the bereaved looks my way without breaking a stride as I remove my hat, he nods his head in acknowledgment. The coach stops in front of the church.

The old wooden casket is carried into the church followed by the bereaved and then the doors close. I relax but just a second because the voice that so frighten me earlier speaks behind me and the cedar tree and I become one. He without some doubt loves to apologize and I explain to him I am fine as I remove tiny bits of bark from my hands. Be over in a moment he says as the mournful sounds of amazing grace flows from the church.

I look up and he is gone. I look around to make sure because one more time and my pants will be soiled beyond hope. I look toward the cemetery and notice the fresh mound of dirt and then toward the church which is leaning toward the right and rear and in front my sedan.

I lean on the cedar and realize its size is once again as it was a few minutes ago. Maybe some hours ago, I don't know! All I know is that I have had a moment here and I am going as fast as my legs will allow me to my automobile.

As I make a turn in the gravel lot, I look toward the cemetery and still wonder why I did because all I see is green unmolested ground. There is no indication of a fresh grave.

I make the turn from the lane onto the hard road in a gravel throwing thunderous exit and speed down the dip and over the raise and swerve violently to miss a man of moderate

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height and broad shoulders carrying a pick and shovel on his shoulder.

Looking over my shoulder to make sure I had not struck him, I slide to a stop knowing he would not be there. Then with every ounce of my weight I press the accelerator to floor.

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