



The Ghostwriter is the official newsletter of the Great Lakes Association of Horror Writers.

Members news/sales/publications/etc. should be sent to Peggy Christie at peggy.christie@comcast.net

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The Ghostwriter

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The Other Side of Normal: A Message from the President

Now that NaNoWriMo is over, we can all take a breather and get back to more normal writing ventures. For those of you who participated, I would like to ask a question. Did you find it hard to make your word count? I did. And that leads me to another question; are you a putit-inner or, like me a leaveit-outer. Some of you are probably sitting there thinking that I have lost all my marbles now, but let me assure you, I do have a point.

The reason I have trouble with nanowrimo (thought I've won both years that I've participated) is that I naturally leave a lot out of my stories during the first draft. For me, the story only comes in pieces. I can manage

to put them in order most of the time, but there are always big holes, holes big enough at time to drive a truck through.

To give you an example of my leaveit-outerness my story 'Not Another Crank Call' which will be in our anthology, started life as a four hundred word story about ten years ago. For most of those ten years, it sat in a filing cabinet. Over the last two or three years however, it had grown to about thirty nine hundred words. Though I leave a lot out, it all eventually gets put in.

Stephen King once wrote that he is a natural putit-inner and his formula for getting his work

trimmed down is: second draft = first draft minus 10%. This would not work for me, but it might work for you. If you feel that your work in the first draft is too long, remember this formula. It might do you some good.

Are you a putit-inner or leaveit-outer? Figure out which one you are and act accordingly. For me, being a leaveit-outer is just fine. Perhaps that's why my articles are always so short.

I'll see you in Oz folks

Adam Gifford
President

Demon of the Month

THE GRINCH

AKA: Evil Grouch

HOME: Mountain cave

SHAPE: Pear

POWERS: The ability to impersonate holiday icons, mind control over smaller animals, thievery, sewing

ENEMIES/WEAKNESSES: Whos of Whoville, Christmas, Betty Lou Who, "Welcome Christmas" song, holiday décor, the "warm fuzzies"



The Tomb Keeper Archives - by Michael Cieslak

Welcome to the twilight of the year. The Earth has enclosed herself in a blanket of snow and the time has come for - hold on, let me see here. One, two, three, four, five- oh yeah, that one makes six, um- well there are a lot of holidays coming up. If you need suggestions for that horror writer on your list (or if you need suggestions to give other people), here are a few links which work for whatever holiday you celebrate.

Disclaimer: Products and merchandise available at the following links are interesting, but inclusion on the list does not equate to actual trials or ownership by the Tomb Keeper nor does it imply endorsement of same.

Phew, now that we have that out of the way.

We are going to start out with something everyone can use (unless you work in the quill and parchment medium): software designed specifically for creative writers. PageFour "is a tabbed word processor and outliner for creative writers." That is right, word processing software designed for writers, not business people. There are a number of features designed to make your writing chores easier including character summaries, plot outlines, and different ways of organizing your material. Of special interest is the ability to scan for repetitive use of the same words or phrases. There are quite a few screen shots on

their website (<http://www.softwareforwriting.com/>) as well as a FREE trial download. What have you got to lose?

PageFour is designed to work in the PC environment. What if, like me, you shun the use of Windows for the Apple? Are you SOL? Of course not! Check out Storyist Software (<http://www.storyist.com/index.php>) which bills itself as "a powerful story development tool for novelists and screenwriters." It features many of the same organizational tools discussed above, as is designed for Mac OSX. There are also templates and screenwriting support available.

Note to the NaNoist: Both of these companies were sponsors of this year's NaNoWriMo. So there is one more reason for suggesting them! Speaking of NaNo, November may be over and the fast pace novelling challenge is done for the year. However, there is still time to pick up some swag! Visit the NaNo site (<http://www.nanowrimo.org/>) and click on "Donation/Store" or go directly to the Office of Letters and Light (<http://store.lettersandlight.org/home.php?cat=6>) to get your tee-shirts, mugs, books, tote-bags, or anything else you might want to help you remember the insanity that is November. You can also make a donation which will support the student writing program, the over-seas library program, and will help keep the

NaNo site up and running all year long.

Quick Note: As of this writing, NaNoWriMo DID reach this year's goal of \$275,000! Thank you to all who donated -- you have earned your halos once again.

Sometimes the words just flow and we are awed by our extraordinary gift. Other times it requires the proper setting. If you need help getting into the mood, visit the Midnight Syndicate store (<http://www.midnightsyndicate.com/buymusic.htm>) and pick up a few CDs. Their two early CDs, Realm of Shadows and Born of the Night are currently out of print and once the current stock is sold out, that is it! Do not fear, many of the tracks are available on the 'best of' CD Out of the Darkness. This is the perfect music to write creepy stuff to. As for "setting the mood" for something else, well, that depends on you. The website also sells tee shirts, caps, mugs, and stickers. Midnight Syndicate will be featured on two upcoming soundtracks, so get your swag now so you can say "Oh, yeah. I have been a fan forever." Real fans might be interested to know that MS will be featured on an upcoming episode of Haunted Voices Radio which you can listen to at <http://www.hauntedvoicesradio.com/>, by RSS feed, and on Sirius Satellite Radio.

Fans of horror movies know that there are a ton of DVD collections available for lovers

of the Classic movie monsters. Surfers of the web know that there are a ton of sites which sell these collections. The trick is finding the site with the really low price. That site might be Boston Pete (<http://www.bostonpete.com/index.html>). This site offers a lot of collections for very low prices. Scan through Sci-Fi and Horror for classics featuring Vincent Price, the Universal movie monsters, and all of your favorites.

Those with more diverse tastes in horror cinema might want to check out NextTag. The prices vary widely, but there appear to be some good deals here and there. Going directly to <http://www.nexttag.com/horror-movie-collection/> will bring up a diverse list with everything from the Hammer movies, to Japanese horror, to Australian horror.

What on Earth puts out a hard copy catalog every few months that is filled with all kinds of bizarre things. Sure, there are a lot of tee shirts and DVD collections, but there is some very original stuff also. I noticed a few things in the last catalog that I thought would make perfect gifts for that dark soul on your list. The first is the book Final Exits. It is a collection of death certificates which reveal "the most common ways that humans die, the strange circumstances that accompany the most bizarre deaths, and astonishing trivia

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Check It Out

<http://www.deathndementia.com/category/anomaly.html>

Horror's Top 10 Sexiest Female Stars – by Tom Sawyer

As my friend and colleague, Peggy Christie wrote about Horror's sexiest male actors, I have taken the demure and deadly female stars of this genre. Some have obvious talents other than acting, but this is not about the bard, but horror and the movies these starlets managed to sex-up with their physical attributes and characterizations. So without further ado.

1. **INGRID PITT**- Perhaps the best known and one of the best looking women from Hammer Studios. Miss Pitt is representative of what was known with Hammer Glamour, that included such eye candy as Kate O'Mara, Veronica Carlson, Martine Beswick, Caroline Munro, Vitoria Vetri and a slew of others. Pitt played vampire, victim, and just plain murdering vamp with equal skill. She is best known for playing Hammer films most seductive female vampire in the early 1970's. She played in *The Vampire Lovers*, *Countess Dracula*, *The Wicker Man*, *The House That Dripped Blood* and more. She was also a concentration camp survivor.
2. **JAMIE LEE CURTIS**- The daughter of Janet Leigh of *Psycho* fame and Tony Curtis became the late 1970's and early 80's scream queen with her performances in *The Fog*, *Halloween* and *Prom Night* and other films early on. She then went on star in other horror sci-fi films as *Virus*, and the *Halloween* sequels. She played the pursued and victimized very well, with her usually becoming the heroine in the end.
3. **ADRIENNE BARBEAU**- With her two major and obvious talents, Miss Barbeau was a natural for horror. She starred in such films as *The Fog*, *Escape From New York*, *Creepshow*, *Swamp Thing*, *Open House*, *Burial of the Rats*, and *Cannibal Women In the Avocado Jungle of Death*, not to mention a few made-for-television films dealing with horror. Probably her best was where she kept her clothes on and that John Carpenter's *The Fog*.
4. **KATE BECKINSALE**- While she acted in such movies as *Haunted* and *Van Helsing*, Beckinsale has become the sexiest female vampire since Ingrid Pitt, donned the fangs in the late 1960's and early 1970's. She is equally adept at playing vampire and heroine. Who else could have played Selene in *Underworld*, but her.
5. **JENNIFER LOVE HEWITT**- Yeah, I know she's the Ghost Whisperer and she is a little better in the acting department with talents similar to Barbeau's, but she has been in some horror movies as well. I know *What You Did Last Summer*, its sequel and of course the previously mentioned *Ghost Whisperer*. While many might not view the television show as true horror, it is entertaining and ghosts are a part of the horror genre.
6. **CERINA VINCENT**- She has come a long way from playing Maya the Yellow Power Ranger. Miss Vincent has definitely grown up and gotten much exposure in the horror genre. She has starred in *Cabin Fever*, *It Waits*, *Seven Mummies*, *Sasquatch Mountain* and *Return to House on the Haunted Hill*. While not in as many horror movies as some here, she is definitely one of the more sexier horror film stars.
7. **DEBBIE ROCHON**- The Queen of the B- Horror movies who has probably starred in more B-Horror films than all of the other nine actresses combined. Starring in such movies as *Dead and Rotting*, *Bleed*, *The Bog Creatures*, *Vampire Queen*, *Screech of the Decapitated* and a whole slew of others, the raven-haired beauty has made a career of acting in B movies and is pretty good, not-to-mention popular at it. She has won some awards from horror and B-movie critics.
8. **MELISSA BRASSELE**- If you thought Adrienne Barbeau had some major talents, well then Melissa is even bigger in that department when it comes to her talents. Like Rochon, Brasselle (See even her name tells it like it is) she has primarily starred in independent and B- movie productions. Brasselle has starred in *Curse of the Komodo*, *Cheerleader Massacre*, *Raptor*, *Demolition High*, *Sorceress*, the remake of *The Wasp Woman*, *Cyborg 3* and *Possess by the Night*. Like Rochon she has also written and has acted as a stunt performer.
9. **PAM GRIER**- An almost ageless beauty who was made her share of horror films. Miss Grier started out her career with the King of the B's, Roger Corman and was featured in the very successful cult 'women in chains, prison, etc films that featured T & A along with storyline. Grier then went on to such horror and sci-fi films as *Twilight People*, *Scream Blacula Scream*, *The Arena*, *Something Wicked This Way Comes*, *Class of 1999*, *Escape From LA*, *Fortress 2*, *The Ghosts of Mars* and *Bones*. Grier is currently working on a horror film called *The Conjuring*.
10. **KRISTY SWANSON**- The original Buffy had to be included. While her career has not gone as big as it could have, a few of her horror related films have been unforgettable. This buxom blonde rose to fame as Buffy in *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*. She also starred in some lesser but pretty popular horror films *Deadly Friend*, *Flowers In the Attic*, and *Highway to Hell*. She also played a conniving murderess in *Bad to the Bone* and played in other suspense or horror related films called *Red Water*, *Living Death* and *The Black Hole*.

So there you have the top ten. You could probably give some honorable mentions to actresses like Barbara Crampton of the *Castle Freak*, *Re-Animator*, and *From Beyond* fame and of course the actresses that made up the Hammer Glamour in the 1960's and 70's, including those not listed, but other than that, these are a pretty decent top ten.

Archives – cont'd

about the unexpected dangers in everyday modern life.” It can be found on-line at

(http://www.whatonearthcatalog.com/whatonearth/Item_Final-Exits_AX6122_p.s._dpr.html)

The gift that every writer needs is a Dead Fred Pen Holder (http://www.whatonearthcatalog.com/whatonearth/Item_Dead-Fred-Pen-Holder_AX5522_ps_srm.html).

It is a squishy silicone person in the classic dead body outline pose. What makes this a good

gift for a horror writer? The fact that you stab Fred through the heart with your pen and he holds it for you!

Finally, I have to list a site which sells a very, very strange assortment of items. Sure, The Black Hole of Los Alamos (<http://members.aol.com/blkhola/home/>) has nothing to do specifically with writing or horror, but it is darned interesting. The Black Hole is a resale outlet which specializes in “used scientific equipment,

electronics, lab supplies, nuclear by-products, surplus items and materials.” Shoppers can pick up everything from beakers to bookcases to “nuclear instrumentation.” My favorite is the 25-Gallon Fermacell Fermentor. The website alludes to “special projects,” but then states “Now you can make your own beer like the nuclear scientists do.” There are even items which date back to the Manhattan Project (and if the possibility of nuclear

annihilation is not horrifying, I don’t know what is). Movie companies and the nearby art community frequent the New Mexico store. If the props are good enough for the movies, they would be great for your Halloween display.

Well that puts a wrap on 2007. Tune in next year for more interesting, terrifying, and just plain odd websites. Until then, have a safe a happy holiday season.

Twisted 'Twas the Night Before Christmas- by Adam and Jennifer Gifford

'Twas the night before
Christmas

And all through the house,
A little monster was stirring,
Devouring a mouse.

The shutters were drawn
No light could be seen,
As the monsters in the kitchen
Pulled out knives that did gleam

While children were nestled
Sleeping safe in their beds
Evil gremlins were waiting
To sever their heads.

With Bobby in one room,
And the girls 'cross the hall,
The monsters did plot to take
one and all.

When down in the basement
Arose such a thunder
Throwing back sheets,
As beds got hid under.

With knives in their hands,
They moved silent and still-
And the blood won't stop
flowing
'til they've had their fill.

The house was filled
With children so sweet,
But the monsters just knew
They were tasty to eat.

In what did my horror filled
eyes first appear
But miniature creatures
gruesome and near.

With beady eyes so lifeless and
dark
I knew in a heartbeat that I was
his mark.

More faster than rabbits they
howled in delight
Dragging their bloodied knives
in clear sight.

Hail evil, hail darkness, for
we've got it right-
We don't come on All Hallows,
we come Christmas night.

From the top of the stairs to
locked cellar doors,
Slash away, slash away, and
hack away more.

As silence proceeds the eye of
the storm
If we have our way, you'll be all
dead by morn'.

So hide under beds and in
closets shut tight,
Nothing can save you from sure
death tonight.

And in gasping horror I heard in
the walls,
The scarping and gnawing
outside in the halls.

As I drew up my fist, and was
turning around,
I tried to be quiet, and not make
a sound.

They were covered in blood,
from their head to their feet
Ripping at flesh, ripping bone
from the meat.

A ghastly trail with blood
everywhere,
They were stabbing and killing
without even a care.

Their teeth how they shown, so
jagged and rotted
Their points dripping blood, for
their deeds now plotted.

Their snarl-like grins, drawn up
like a clown
Oozing blood tinted drool as
they watched me frown.

The stump of a limb, held tight
in their grasp
I knew my time on Earth
wouldn't last.

I had just once chance, to escape
with my life,
Forgetting my children, my
possessions, my wife.

I could make it downstairs,
through the door I would flee
And foil their sinister ritual and
reverie.

I spoke not a word, treading
quick to the door
Bare feet sliding through the
warm ooze on the floor.

But too many in front of the
door did they stand,
So in defeat I collapsed, head
hung in my hands.

They sprang up upon me with a
quick flash of speed,
As their razor like claws slashed
at me in need.

My last dying words were lost in
the night
Spooky Christmas to all, and to
all a good fright.

Double Feature: Movie Reviews - by Peggy Christie

I really wanted to review a couple of Holiday Horror movies this month, for the obvious reason. But I was thwarted by my local video store. Seems the only yuletide gore fest people want to rent is *Black Christmas* – but I already reviewed that one. (Yes, I'm whining. Deal.)

So instead I've plucked two bloody movies off the store shelf instead. The first is a pretty good B flick called "Bloodlines". This movie follows Amber Strickland, a young Kentucky woman on her way to college. Her jeep breaks down on the road and she is knocked unconscious and kidnapped by unknown assailants.

When she wakes up, she finds herself captive in a ramshackle home in the backwoods of Kentucky with a handful of other young women. Seems the ever present inbred mountain men are at it again and a whole family of them took the girls.

The twist here is this: they know they're all inbred and can't risk having kids within their own ranks. So they swipe women from the road and bring them home – to breed.

Well, Amber is having NONE of this crap. We never really know for sure, but she and her two brothers are from some kind of military family or just really really good at hunting. She's got skills for fighting hardly seen in a beautiful woman. When her brothers realize what's happened to her, they search her out, find her, and together they kick some major hillbilly ass.

Now, like I said, this is a B horror flick. So don't expect

me to regale about the special effects, make-up, acting, or dialogue. A couple of the more mutated in-breds basically had rubber masks and frizzy wigs from the local Halloween store. And of course the acting was sub-par, as was most of the dialogue.

That said, however, I was impressed with this movie. Some of the actors have quite a bit of "secular" experience under their belts. Name Brand television and movies have been graded by several of the actors. So when I say sub-par, I mean just really right below barely underneath the par measurement.

I also ended up falling in love with Amber Strickland and her two brothers, Cody and Bear. I really wanted Amber to survive. I wanted to know why Bear couldn't or wouldn't talk. I wanted to know where their parents were and was that the reason Bear was mute. I wanted her brothers to find her and save the day. They had a family motto: "The strength is in the Strickland." Hell yeah!

I'm almost embarrassed to admit this but I cried at the end. I don't usually become emotionally invested in a B movie, unless it's to cheer on the flood of bloody entrails. But the familial bond of loyalty and love between the Strickland siblings had me reaching for the Kleenex and cheering for their success.

3 hatchets



Chocolate really does make everything better. My next flick is "Blood and Chocolate", a wonderful werewolf movie with a new spin on the timeless legend. Hell, the title alone was worth the \$2.99 rental fee!

B&C is the tale of Vivian, a young loup garou living in Bucharest with her Aunt. Viv's family was slaughtered in America after the locals discovered the secret of what they really are. She fled to Romania, where she had been born. Now a young woman, she has been chosen by the leader of the pack, Gabriel, to be his bride. Unfortunately, she hates the idea, especially since she's nursing a big time crush on a human, who happens to be studying wolves for his next graphic novel.

This artist, Aiden, has discovered that the legend of the werewolf isn't really all that bad. Here, in eastern Europe, they are revered, not hated. The loup garou he has read about is a race of shapshifters that can change at will – they don't need the full moon. All they need to do is will the change to happen and it does. Can you imagine what that would be like? Needless to say, Vivian keeps quiet about her opinion on that.

Well, the pack finds out about her love and decides to do something about it. Gabriel sends his son to deal with it and we find out that at least part of the legend is true. Now Aiden knows the truth about the existence of werewolves and it doesn't seem so cool and fascinating anymore. Will his new found love with Vivian survive now that the pack is determined to destroy him? Can he even get past his own fears and love her anyway?

Wow- what a great flick. I love this new spin on the werewolf story. The idea that all they have to do is think about changing and they do. No more mindless animalistic behavior. No more slobbering hairy monsters that are just out rip and shred. No more being a slave to the cycles of the moon.

The special effects for the change were pretty cool. In the movie, Aiden says the will to change is almost magical. And that's what it looks like when it happens. The actors portraying the pack all move around like dogs when in human form. They climb and jump like a dog would. Not completely graceful but full of power and purpose. Even the music throughout the film is very primal, sensual, and animalistic.

I only had a few problems with the flick. One, everyone had a different accent. American, French, English, Romanian... what the hell was that all about? I think it was supposed to lend a feeling of scattered wolves coming together in Romania where they can feel at home. But I just thought it was distracting. Also there was something about a prophecy and a new hopeful age coming along with a female, which I think was supposed to be Vivian. But it almost seemed as if it was put in after the movie was filmed to add another dimension to the story. Didn't really do much of anything for me.

All in all, this was a great new werewolf movie.

4 hatchets



Ho Ho Ho Horror: A Christmas Carol – by Tom Sawyer

It's that time of year again.

No I'm not talking about Santa Claus, Rudolph, Frosty the abominable snowman, presents, candy canes or any thing like that.

I am talking about the horror themed movies and literature around the holidays. No, I'm not talking about movies like Silent Night Deadly Night, You Better Watch Out, Black Christmas, To All a Goodnight or some other slasher flick.

I am talking about a real classic.

A Christmas Carol.

Yeah, I know, it is viewed as a Christmas and seasonal movie where a man discovers the true spirit of Christmas after being visited by the spirits of past, present and future.

But, if you really look at it, this is a ghost story and old Ebenezer Scrooge was scared straight by these phantoms.

First off, Scrooge, the old miserable fart, was not friendly or very well liked. He was a lonely miser who had about as much compassion as one of the axe murderers in the previously mentioned holiday slasher flicks.

Christmas Eve he comes home and sees the face of his old partner in his door knocker before even entering his old dark house. According to Scrooge "Darkness is cheap."

Scrooge then gets ready for bed, alone in this large old, dark house that is basically only lit up by candlelight and a fireplace. He then sees Marley's faces again in the woodwork.

Scrooge sees what is a locomotive hearse heading at him on the stairs He thinks he hears something like chains and is confronted by his equally old, but very dead business partner Jacob Marley, who was like Scrooge when he was alive. He is burdened with chains and is weighed down by keys, cashboxes and ledgers and condemned to walk the earth for eternity because of his miserly ways. Marley warns Scrooge he is going to be visited by three other ghosts that night.

Now if that doesn't sound like a ghost story with a warning for him to straighten up I don't know what does.

After Marley leaves, the Scrooge thinks he ate some bad

meat or drank too much and discounts it.

He is then visited by the ghost of Christmas past, who gives him some haunting images of his life with his business minded and neglectful father, and where he eventually took a wrong turn, with both love and family.

Next he gets some big boisterous ghost representing Christmas present. After showing him the dire straights of Bob Cratchit's family and Tiny Tim in particular he begins to soften. He also bears witness to his nephew Fred and how cheerful he is towards the holiday.

Scrooge also gets a disturbing present day vision of when the ghost of Christmas Present lifts his gown and reveals two children that look emaciated, cold and disturbing. He is told they are 'ignorance' and 'want'. He then projects in seeing an empty chair with a cane and no owner, that of Tiny Tim, if things stay on their present course.

Finally, Scrooge gets a visit from the scariest ghost of all. One who doesn't say a thing, is

covered thoroughly in a large dark robe, and only points. Scrooge basically asks the questions and begins to figure that things look pretty bleak. He sees people laughing at his demise, how lonely his life had been, and how nobody missed him upon his death.

This causes him to repent and change his ways. He goes from a selfish old miser to a kindly, generous old man who redeems himself.

As cheerful in the end and as representative of the holiday season and the spirit it evokes, this story is a terrifying ghost story at times. It has not just one ghost, but four. And while not malevolent, they are pretty disturbing nonetheless in what they represent.

So, if you really need a scary tale with some Christmas spirit, while we experience the frozen hell of winter outside, then A Christmas Carol is still the best movie for this. It's just up to you to decide which version of this is the best. Whichever one you choose, I guarantee you won't be disappointed.

Ho Ho Horror.

'Tis the Season to be Scary – by Jennifer Gifford

Did you wait until the last minute to go Christmas shopping? Can't figure out what to get that horror lover in the family who already has everything? Not to fear. This year the DVD market is flooded with a mass of low priced DVD's of scary, not so scary, and the downright cheesiest horror movies from the 80's and 90's that are sure to please this Christmas.

I was excited (and a little embarrassed to boot) to admit that three of my favorite classic scary movies from the 80's were released on DVD just in time for the holidays. First up on my list of unlikely stocking stuffers is Night of the Comet starring

Katherine Mary Stewart and Robert Beltran (think Commander Chakotay from Star Trek Voyager). The plot? The Earth passes through the tail of a comet, which dooms all human and animal life except for those who happened to be completely enclosed inside metal containers (for example, the three main protagonists spend the night in a metal shed, a steel-lined projection room, and an 18-wheeler's trailer). Unprotected people and animals quickly dehydrate and turn into piles of red calcium dust. Those only partially exposed first gradually degenerate into cannibalistic

zombies for hours or days before succumbing. Those people that were only partially exposed are meant to wander the desolate streets of the new world as blood hungry, flesh eating zombies whose unearthly demise will be both slow and painful. Two sisters struggle in the vacant Los Angeles suburbs wondering, 'who else is left?' The films low end budget and lack of celebrity A-listers only adds to the comedic horror of this dark tale. I love it because it's cheesy, it has enough science fiction to spice things up, it has a girl in the lead role that not only survives but gets to kick ass AND use

automatic weapons without the lame cliché of injury, tripping, or lack of knowledge on self defense. Plus, it's just a good short flick. Put out by Fox Video and is a steal at \$12.99 on DVD. The second film that many are not going to have on their wish lists this year, but should, is Innocent Blood starring Anne Parillaud (La Femme Nikita) and Anthony LaPaglia (Without A Trace). The tag line for the film is, 'The comedy that Takes a Bite out of Crime' and that literally sums up the plot. A reluctant femme fatale, who happens to be a vampire with

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Market Report - by Peggy Christie

ANTHOLOGIES

NEW [OUR SHADOWS SOAR](#) - 1-time POD/PDF (Vocal Phantom Press); dark sf (fic). Pay: shared profits. Words: 3-5k. RT: 2 weeks. Reprints: query. E-sub: [only](#).

[Lincoln Crisler, Editor](#).

Deadline: until filled

PubDate: TBA

NEW: [OUR SHADOWS SPEAK VOL. 2](#) - 1-time POD/PDF (Vocal Phantom Press); h/df (fic). Pay: shared profits. Words: 3-5k. RT: 2 weeks. Reprints: query. E-sub:

[only](#). [Lincoln Crisler, Editor](#).

Deadline: until filled

PubDate: TBA

MAGAZINES

NEW: [PARANORMAL ROMANCE 2](#) - bimonthly paperback; paranormal romance (fic). Pay: \$25. Words: <4k. RT: 30-60 days. Reprints: yes. E-sub: [only](#). [Glenn & Hortencia, Editor \(QS\)](#). See also Man's Story 2 & Vampires 2

NEW: [SPECULATIVE MYSTERY ICONOCLAST](#) - quarterly PDF/limited audio; mystery cross-genre with sf/h/f/df (fic/art). Pay: \$35. Words: 2-6k. RT: <2½ months. Reprints: no. E-sub: [only](#).

[Eben David November, Editor \(QS\)](#).

Reading Periods 20Dec07-31Jan08, 01Mar08-30Apr08, 01Jun08-31Jul08, 01Sep08-31Oct08

1st Issue Debut: Mid March 2008

NEW: [VISIONSARY TONGUE](#) - biannual print; darkf (fic/nonfic/poem/art). Pay: 1 copy. Words: <3k (not firm). RT: <3 months. Reprints: prefers not. E-sub: [prefers](#). [Donna Scott & Jamie Spracklen, Editors \(QS\)](#).

[CLARKESWORLD MAGAZINE](#) - monthly chapbook/webzine; sf/f/h (fic). Pay: 10¢/word. Words: <4k. RT: <50 days. Reprints: no. E-sub: [only](#). [Nick Mamatas, Senior Editor \(QS\)](#). SFWA

BOOK PUBLISHER

NEW: [BLU PHIER PUBLISHING](#) - print; rom/h/bizarro/west/etc. (fic/nonfic/graphic novels). Pay: adv=\$100-200, royalty=10-20%. Words: 75k-unlimited. RT: <30 days. Reprints: query. E-sub: [only](#). [Scott Saylor & Nathan Andrews, Fiction Editors \(QS\)](#).

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DEAD MARKETS: Chimera World 5, Dark Legacy



Sydney Wells is an accomplished, independent, Los Angeles-based concert violinist. She is also blind, and has been so since a childhood tragedy. As our story opens, Sydney undergoes a double corneal transplant, a surgery she has waited her whole life to have, and her sight is restored. After the surgery, neural ophthalmologist Dr. Paul Faulkner helps Sydney with the difficult adjustment, and with the support of her older sister Helen, Sydney learns to see again. But Sydney's happiness is short-lived as unexplainable shadowy and frightening images start to haunt her. Are they a passing aftermath of her surgery, Sydney's mind adjusting to sight, a product of her imagination, or something horrifyingly real? As Sydney's family and friends begin to doubt her sanity, Sydney is soon convinced that her anonymous eye donor has somehow opened the door to a terrifying world only she can now see.

Dracula: The Greatest Novel Ever Written? – by Tom Sawyer

Dracula.

Thanks to cinema in both Hollywood and Hammer Studios in England, the stage and even the book from which it all started, everybody knows the name.

With the possible exception of Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* and Robert Louis Stevenson's *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, no novel has terrified as much or for as long as Bram Stoker's literary creation has. And, with the possible exception of *Frankenstein*, no horror novel has been as acclaimed and no central character as infamous.

A case can be made that Bram Stoker's *Dracula* is perhaps the greatest horror novel ever written.

This means no disrespect to authors like Edgar Allan Poe, H.P. Lovecraft, Stephen King or any other horror authors both past and present. But, no character has ever had as much screen, stage, or literary presence as *Dracula* for the past 110 years.

Bram Stoker after much research on European folklore and stories about vampires, he wrote his most famous novel. It was published in 1897. It was not the first novel or story that dealt with vampires, but it was to

become by the most famous and imitated. It could be singularly said that *Dracula* was responsible for many theatrical and film interpretations since its creation. Literary critics attributed the novel to many genres that included horror fiction, the gothic novel and what is known as invasion literature. Many underlying themes ranging from the Victorian culture, conventional and repressed sexuality of the times, immigration, folklore and even colonialism have been examined by literary critics and researchers.

Dracula was preceded and at least partly inspired by Sheridan Le Fanu's 1871 "*Carmilla*" who was a lesbian/ bi-sexual vampire who preyed on lonely young women. An even earlier story called the "*Vampyre*" created by John Polidori in 1891 gave us the aristocratic, distinguished man-monster. Stoker went one better combining the attributes of ghosts and other horrors to his vampire as well. It was Stoker who created the image that *Dracula*'s image could not be seen in mirrors or cross running water.

Originally Stoker was going to call the story *The Dead Un-dead* and in manuscript form it was simply called *The Un-Dead*. *Dracula* himself was originally

going to be called Count Vampyre, but according to researchers he came across the word *Dracul*. *Dracul* was derived from the words *Draco* in Megleno-Romanian language. This word meaning devil or Dragon originally intrigued Stoker.

This gave birth to name *Dracula*.

The novel, while showing a conflict between good and evil, a constant theme throughout much of literature, there is a conflict between the world of the past that contains folklore, legend and religious piety and the emerging world of technology that has the first automobiles, typewriters and the telegraph. None of the characters are so modern they ignore the faith of their religion, or that the demonic exists. They use technology, rationality and faith to defeat the main protagonist.

Unlike other novels that were written in first person or by third person omniscient, the novel *Dracula* is made up of a series of journal entries, news stories, letters, telegrams and other communications written by several different narrators throughout the stories. All tie together the series of events that lead them to confront the evil vampire. By today's standards it is not very long at all.

Stoker creation, much like Shelley's has been often imitated and re-told time and time again. There have been different versions and even characters created that were related, influenced, cursed or just visited *Dracula*'s dwellings. Hammer Studios in England made a series of movies that dealt with both the *Dracula* and *Frankenstein* character from the 1950's all the way through to the mid 1970's. Many of which dealt with vampires that were not *Dracula*, but heavily influenced by what Stoker had put forth. Some 700 productions with vampires have been influenced by *Dracula* in the last 110 years.

Stoker's as well as *Dracula*'s influence have lived long beyond the grave in many respects. His character has been romanticized, sexed up and even copied onto other vampires on large and small screen alike. Because of Stoker and his novel *Dracula*, vampires, especially that of Count *Dracula*, have been one of horror's, if not literatures most influential, enduring and memorable characters.

Dracula has lived long beyond the grave.

And in this case, it is a good thing.

'Tis the Season to be Scary – cont'd

a conscience, accidentally bites a local mob boss, and before she can break of the affair and his neck, he has run amuck in the city. Several hours later, the mob boss starts taking over the town, one nemesis at a time. The local cop assigned to the mob boss to bring him in racketeering and murder charges is caught up in their preternatural game of cat and mouse, adding comedic humor to the twisted tale of love gone bad. Released by Warner Brothers Home Video,

it's the perfect stocking stuffer. A bonus? Wal-Mart carries it in their \$5.50 and under bins of DVD's.

The last that my true love can give to me for Christmas is one of my favorite movies released to DVD, *Tales from the Crypt: Demon Night* starring Jada Pinckett Smith and the yummy and oh so talented Billy Zane. The plot? It's a doozie, laced with historical data and religious undertones (two of my favorite

flavors when it comes to horror movies). Brayker is a man who carries the last of seven keys, special containers which hold the blood of Christ and were scattered across the universe to prevent the forces of evil from taking over. If *The Collector*, Billy Zane dressed in head to toe black (a bonus the film doesn't mention) gets the last key, the universe will fall into Chaos, and he has been tracking Brayker all the way to a small inn in a nowhere town. The

quintessential battle of good versus evil got a new twist, and all in all, it was just a great movie for being based off a series on HBO. The best feature about the DVD: it's priced at only \$7.99.

So deck the halls, trim the tree, toss another limb, er log on the fire, and curl up to something naughty for a nice change of pace for the holidays.

Journey's End

Is every one working hard on their stories for this year's short story contest? I hope so. I have another line for you this month and here it is.

Love and hate are the only emotions that can blur the line between reality and fantasy.

Also, I will be keeping a tally of the lines that have gone before so all of you can remember what has come before. Here is last month's line.

There's only so much you can do when you're dead.

Now, go forth and create. I hope to see many stories next year.

Until next time,

Adam

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