

Halloween Hex



A COLLECTION OF POEMS BY

Wanda Halabis

HALLOWEEN HEX

WRITTEN BY

WANDA HAŁABIS

Hallow's Eve

It is midnight yet the children are still running –
for sweets, for tricks, for thrills.

Flashy wrappers,
candles on the path to the front door.

A bit dangerous perhaps,
but so be it.

I turn out the light,
walk past the candles,
slip through a crowd of gypsies, pirates, and
princesses.

The graveyard is empty, besides a howl a few
rows back.

Poor Howard.

I run a cloaked hand on the tombstones,
my nails scratch gently at each surface.
There are no stars in the sky, no moon in sight.

Finally I see it, my most visited tomb.

I place a white rose down, see what I am
promised.

An orb, foggy, glassy, full of past and future is
summoned.

I murmur to myself, slip it into my pocket,
its heat spreading as I turn.
It is heavy in my cloak,
dragging me down as I drag myself back home.



Vendetta

“Darling –”

“Dearest –”

A goblet of blood-red wine is thrust into my hand.

His face is pale, his collar high,

his fingers covered in rings of gold.

I lower my hood.

It is cool under the earth,

peaceful.

Not a mirror in sight but I see it in his eyes,

he is pleased with my appearance.

New victims,

old lovers,

that is the way of the world.

I have travelled far to see him,

but I too have a price.

I see it then –

the book that was stolen from me years ago.

I try to hide my movements but he sees my eyes

flicker.

Pointed teeth slip from his smile.

“Not yet,” he says.

Then when?

As he watches me hungrily, I fear I have little time.

I slip past him, take what’s mine,

drop a silver coin,

leave a trail of dust and darkness in my wake.



Poison

The night is dark.

I stand in the kitchen, a glass of wine at my side,
and pull to me a book and a cauldron.

I skim through thick pages and find it, oh yes.

The page is well-worn.

My fingers dance as my eyes travel and I summon
what I need, little glass jars of it –

garlic and rosemary,

the blood of a friend,

the tears of an enemy.

I blink and wait.

The flame is lit,

the potion simmers.

I sweep in a cobweb,

the hair of a cat,

the corpse of a forest frog.

I wipe my hand on myself.

Music plays,

I stir.

A cloud rises from the cauldron.

I look out the window –

no, there is no one there.
The cauldron calls and
I return to the brew,
dip a finger,
hum to myself,
take a little taste.
It is almost time.



Double, double, toil and trouble...

Rosemary

I am carving a pumpkin when it happens.
I am interrupted.
A cat flicks her tail, hops on my lap and purrs.
At once there is a clash –
screams from the sky.
I slip a glass bottle from my pocket,
bottle a flash of light
and head inside.
It has happened, I know it.
I feel he is no longer with us on this earth.
How did he do it,
how *could* he do it?
I am shocked by my own wrath, yet
the forest cat follows me in, distracting me.
She sniffs at a spider, licks a paw,
walks over to the hearth.
I think I will name her Rosemary.
There is something about her,
something familiar.



Halloween Party

He is gone but I try to cheer myself up.

I attend a masquerade in the heart of town.

Invite-only but I have my ways.

I walk in and regret it immediately.

I bump into Frankenstein's monster,
tread on the foot of an astronaut.

I apologize to neither.

I pour myself a glass of ruby punch,
music blaring in my ears.

A fembot dances with a firefighter,
a cowboy kisses a squirrel.

I swipe at the bushy tail and make my way back.

I will turn into a pumpkin at midnight,

I will lose shoes, and patience, and heart.

Liquor swirls in my head,

I put the glass down.

There is no table, the glass falls,
smashing to the floor.



Ouija

The spirit board lays open in front of us.
She asks the question and I close my eyes.
I am not well,
wracked with guilt and fear over what we are
doing.
I do not want him to speak,
I do not want him to answer,
I want to cast us back into the past.
Lights flicker,
flames waver,
I sweat under my dark dress.
There is a whisper in the night,
a warning to not go further.
I am sickened, want to turn away, when it
happens –
Her hands move as if pulled with a string.
Secrets being summoned...
Do you regret what you've done?
Her hands move to two letters and the answer
fills me with hot, wet, fury:

No.



Spellcast

The stars sparkle in a squid-ink sky,
spirits dance in the land of the dead.
Someone has sprinkled salt nearby,
I have no choice but to back away from the grave.
I clutch the crystal tied to my throat,
eyes blurred with tears.
I did everything for him and still he wanted more.
The best revenge is to avenge
myself while I still have rage simmered.
The spell is still fresh on my tongue when it
happens –
the salt floats and vanishes,
there is a quake from the ground below.
A tree's veins are uprooted,
holes open up in the dirt.
The cracks in the earth widen,
the tombstone collapses.
I know what I am doing is painful for him,
it is not an easy flight from death back to life.
But when he tried to escape with death
I knew it was only fair for him to return to feel my
wrath.

There is a howl, a body is unearthed –
he is mud-ridden but handsome,
dark-haired and dark-hearted.
His eyes open with effort,
I smile at his grimace.
My cape flies behind me,
my eyes burn with excitement.
It will end how it started,
with the word of the witch.



Forest witch

It is dawn and I am in the forest,
collecting mushrooms and herbs and bark.
One woman's poison is another woman's potion
and so I pluck a fickle ivy,
I bend down for a dangerous spore.
The air is crisp,
the sky is grey,
the morning light is upon us.
My basket is full and I make my way home.
Cross the grass to the stone house,
walk to the door on the side.
The door is heavy and it is comforting.
Spiders trickle down the stairs
and down we go
into the cellar.
I plop the basket down on the counter,
stretch my arms overhead,
smile at my collection.
Jars of plants and limbs,
bottles of bones and jelly.
The day is ahead of me and the only thing I have
to do is brew.

A peaceful sigh slips from my mouth,
I am home.

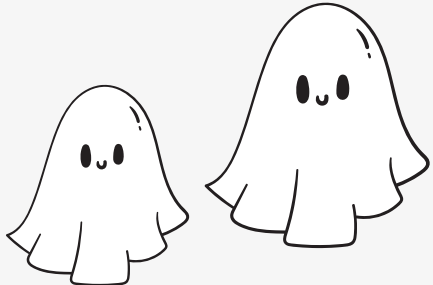


Town Square

Tricks and thieves –
they run through the night
as I watch from the darkness of the forest.
Teenagers smoke and shriek
and I decide to keep walking.
I hear a shuffle,
the sound of leaves being pressed on,
the scratch of a step on the forest floor.
Rosemary appears around the trunk of a tree,
her yellow-green eyes shining.
Her pupils are wide and round like the moon
as she watches me slide a finger to my lips.
We walk together and as I see a trail of gold and
silver wrappers,
I conjure my broom and beckon at the cat.
Soon we are in the air
and I am calmed by the near silence,
the jeers of children far below.
It is hard for a witch on Halloween
but still, I have my perks.

I watch little ghosts run around the town square,
children filled with sugar are draped in white

sheets,
and a laugh escapes my lips.
Happy Halloween.



The Return

Pumpkin guts litter the sidewalk as I sweep past,
robes billowing in the dusk.

Through a window I see a horror film being
played,
a scream accompanying the scene, as expected.

I join my sisters in the cemetery,
I collect the bones of rats passed,
but still something is amiss.

I feel his absence before I notice his presence.
He has escaped and is back now to watch the
show.

I feel my bones blush in anger,
my sisters wait for me to act.

I summon him to me but he just smiles –
he is somehow beyond my control.

He laughs, bows, and disappears.

I've unleashed a monster into the world.

