

Senior Division, Short Fiction

Adam Critchley, Corner Brook

Left To Turn Out The Lights (excerpt)

The sun had begun to set across the bay as the population of the hall spilled out onto its gravel parking lot. Flossy linked her elbow with Eric's and pulled him gently around the back of the building to a small gate. The trail head pushed out through the tuckamore and into the treeline proper before it curved off behind a cliff face, reemerging further up the hill only to snake into obscurity again. The sun's rays thinned to razors as they made their way past the first cliff. The cold of the late fall evening made Eric bountifully aware of the fact that he had not dressed for the outdoors.

The entire attendance of the meeting had assembled outside. Eric was to follow them. It would be easier for them to show him. The path left from just behind the Community hall. It wouldn't be more than 10 minutes walk, he was assured as he was cajoled out into the parking lot.

As he did his best to avoid shivering he felt movement at the top of his pants pocket. He looked down to see Flossy's hand pull back, leaving a cold weight pressed between his skin and the fabric.

"You'll be wanting after it."

He shoved a hand into his pocket and closed his fist around a thin piece of metal, about 3 inches long and tapered to a point; a nail. Familiarity flooded him. He knew that metal was important, but why was it important? He remembered his grandmother screaming at him to turn a sock inside out when he went out to play, but then she had died of Alzheimer's in pretty short order following that. Nan had gone in the ground a catholic woman, but she had a fair number of beliefs and habits that would have seen her hove in the fire.