

Junior Division, Prose

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Plagued Promise (an excerpt)

Someone knocked on the door downstairs and Kelsey startled, dropping the photos.

“Do you think it’s your mom?” She asked Jane, who was starting to rise.

“It could be...”

They descended the stairs cautiously, neither able to pinpoint exactly why they were so uneasy... Kelsey tried to see a figure behind the door just before Jane opened it. A strong gust of wind swarmed through the doorway, and Jane stuck her head outside to see who was there. She shook her head and closed the door.

“There’s no one there.”

They both looked up the stairs. Then back at each other.

Kelsey took the stairs two at a time, and rushed into her aunt’s room. Her eyes zeroed in on the safe—nothing else around it. All the papers and photos were gone.

“How...?” Jane breathed, crawling down and rummaging through some of the clothes.

“Maybe Lynnee didn’t want us to see that stuff so she knocked on the door to distract us, then came into the house another way and took them back,” Kelsey thought out loud, not fully believing it herself. The only other way in would warrant climbing through an upstairs window... something she sincerely doubted her aunt could do.

A stack of books crashed to the ground behind her off the dresser, and she spun, her heart picking up its pace. She heard a creaking behind her, and she whirled back around again, relieved to find Jane.

“What’s wrong?”

“Nothing, I just thought I s- what the-,” Kelsey craned her head up as the lights started flickering alarmingly. She felt her head spin. “Turn off the-,”

She was cut off again as a powerful gust swept through the room, lifting Kelsey off her feet, the world spinning and flashing before her eyes as she tumbled to the ground. Her back arched on impact, pain shooting up her spine and neck, a resounding thud signaling Jane’s fall to her right. She could feel a swirling sensation around her... like mist rising from the murky forest ground and carrying her higher and higher and higher—