

Haven Cottage Holiday

by Mason McKenzie

Fog settled over the landscape before we had a chance to gather firewood.

I rummaged through the information about the cottage, hiking maps, and a handwritten welcome note. Just then, a black cat brushed its body against Oliver's legs.

"I have surprise for you." Oliver smiled at me. He blindfolded me with my own scarf. "Don't peak," he said. I heard the front door close.

In the black, I waited. The cat pressed itself against me, purring, until a bitter cold sunk into my bones. "Oliver?" I called out into the void. My chest constricted. I lifted the scarf. The cat was waiting by the door.

Two knocks pierced the silence.

When I answered, there was only fog. "Oliver, this isn't funny," I bellowed. I saw no sign of him, and night fell like the fog.

I latched the door, exchanging gazes with the cat.

No sooner had I returned to the couch did two more knocks echo against the stone walls.

This time, I sprinted to answer. Again, I saw no one. Before I could stop him, the cat darted into the fog.

Its bloodcurdling hiss pierced the grey black silence. I abandoned the beast, collapsing to the welcome rug with my back against the wood. I felt hot tears forming in my eyes.

Two great knocks reverberated through my spine.

"Is this your cat?"

I peered through the crack to see its crumpled body. "Where is Oliver?"

The last thing I remember was an axe.