
Congratulations to the first winner of The Angler's Creative Writing Competition: Rena Bood! It was the scariest story sent in and as you read it I am sure you will understand why this one won. For those who did not get to send in anything (or did but unfortunately did not win), fear not – we will continue with the competition next issue! Make sure you send in your contribution no later than Wednesday 13th of November. Without further ado, the winning story:

The Silly Doll.

It was that doll, I knew it the moment I walked into the room. It had always been that doll, but especially now, yes, that doll. The pretty one with the nice hair and the handsome clothes. It looked at me, directly, its eyes following me wherever I went in the room. Blond, long curls tried to hide the evil in its eyes. The piercing, soul-searching blue eyes, they could never be mistaken for friendly. It tracked and traced me. It took advantage of my weaknesses, and God knows I have plenty. That doll, in that purple dress that is too good to have been made for a doll, that doll, it was always that doll. But now even more so. The shuffling sound came again, I didn't know where to look, I daren't turn, I daren't breathe. I couldn't comprehend my fear, knowing it was reasonable to fear this thing. It was not just a doll, it was anything but a regular doll. Its shiny black shoes, matching the black ribbon in its hair. The lips full, but grimacing, a mean grimace. No child liked that doll. No adult should want to keep that doll. Now it was dark and it was their fault I was in here, with that doll. And it was shuffling. The soles of its little black shoes showed the signs that I was not crazy. The soles told the truth, as did I, but nobody ever believed me. It's just a silly doll. A creepy doll, yes, but an inanimate object nonetheless. A doll. The shuffling continued. Where was I supposed to go now? I could not go anywhere. I could not hide very well. And it was coming. As it had before. As it always did. That doll. Mortified and in a haze of panic I turned around and clawed at the door once more. It didn't budge and I could only just make out the stifled laughter of them. The ones who put me here. It was all a joke to them. I was in this dark room with it. Shrieking out in pure panic I lost my train of thought, until the shuffling sound was so, so close. I jumped away from it, certain it had almost reached me, I couldn't see where it was. Scaring me more than the dark was that doll. I cried, the tears streaming and streaming and I howled, hoping someone would hear. The laughter continued and I went into a full blown terror. My heart seized up, my head was woozy. I couldn't hear anything except the shuffling. That doll. I curled up in a corner, my brain shutting down with fear. The shuffling was closer. A ray of light that came through the small window all the way at the top of the wall, much, much too far for me to reach, showed me where it was. It stopped a moment in that ray of light, its blue eyes gleaming. The lips could never be mistaken for a smile. It was a sneer, a malicious sneer, I knew it too well. The purple dress moved, as the doll did. Shuffling, shuffling, shuffling, closer, closer, closer. I didn't want to die. I was only small, what chance did I have against it? The laughter grew louder. The door was across from me. That doll in between me and the locked exit. It came closer, invisible in the darkness again. Shuffle, shuffle. So close. Cringing, I tried to get as far away from it as possible. It bumped into my ankle and I howled in sheer terror, producing an inhuman sound, something so animalistic that even the laughter stopped. That doll was visible now. So close, so close. Its blue eyes, its malice so clearly displayed. The purple dress, the black, worn shoes. The shoes that would've convinced anybody had they ever bothered to look. But none had. Pinch. It hurt, it always hurt. But this felt different. This was the last time, this was it and I cried out once more but nobody came. Nobody cared. I passed out, when I opened my eyes again, I saw my body move. The door opened and in came my mother, my loving, adoring mother, her face filled with angst and worry. I wanted to be held and kept safe. She was rushing towards me and lifted my body in the air. Holding it as close as she could hold it. She walked out the room with my body, but without me. I looked down, down at the purple dress, down at the worn black shoes. I looked up to see my eyes stare back at me, malice displayed on my body's face, lips shaped so that it could never be mistaken for a smile. I shuffled, shuffled, shuffled.

