

# The Wand

*By Angela Lombardo*

We are squires in the obedience of Sir Gavin. Gerold is my brother and I, Alan, am his twin. Some say a twin birth is star-crossed, but his lordship took us under his care. Our gallantry has been shown many times on the battlefield, we have saved Gavin's life many times. The knight has a weakness for ale, his torment growing evermore since her ladyship and their daughter Emma succumbed to the flux.

We brothers are forever in the state of sin, stealing whatever is possible from the household. Squires can become knights but we are not noble, seeking a life of pleasure. Sir Gavin must turn a blind eye to our thievery, perhaps because we are his scoundrel stewards and all he has left in his sad existence.

I thought there was a treasure when his lordship conjured a phantom. The cloaked figure appeared in his tent when our caravan returned from a crusade. But when Gerold and I approached the dark spectre, it faded back to the unholy place whence it came. That is when we saw Sir Gavin clutching a sacred box. He wouldn't part with the mysterious possession, even sleeping with it near his brow.

After a night of drunken revelry, we wayward brothers took the strange box away from the dozing knight, finding it contained a wand covered with dazzling gems. Our dreams of riches were dashed when we saw Emma, Gavin's lost child. The ghostly lass cried for her father with agonized lamentations that pierced our ears. I took the wand and held it defiantly, demanding that her soul returns to its graveyard realm.

When the apparition faded, I stealthily returned the wand to our slumbering nobleman. When I peered over my shoulder and spied a look at Gavin, he nodded and smiled.

## Judges Feedback

I liked this story and chose it as my winner as it is thought-provoking and entertaining at the same time. It gave me the impression of a mercenary at an inn telling this tale to curry favour for employment.

## Bio

Angela is active in her writing community and has read essays at Live Lit events sponsored by the Irish American Heritage Center, Chicago. Angela's short story, "Janet Was the Girl" was published by Flash Fiction Magazine in December 2015. "The Rhinestone Pin" was published by East On Eden Literary Magazine in November 2018. "The Astrologer" was published in the Spring issue of Persimmon Tree, March 2021. Her story "The Housesitter" was included in the WriteTime TWO Anthology, January 2022.