

## “BY WIZARD OAK” (Book Review)

Written by Jorge Solis

Sunday, 12 December 2010 17:24

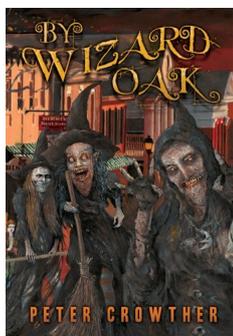
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Peter Crowther's BY WIZARD OAK (Earthling Publications) is a well-crafted supernatural tale about dark magic. The children are laughing as they run off trick-or-treating, never realizing witches are stalking them. This melancholy novel takes a twisted look at terrifying enchantresses and a town in distress.

Spells, mystery and intrigue intertwine in a book about a book. All of the Magellan Bend townspeople, at one point in their lives, have read BY WIZARD OAK AND FAIRY STREAM. The eerie passages describe, in perfect detail, a haunted town much like their own. No one can exactly tell you how the story ends; they just remember reading about horrifying figures gathering screaming children together on the street.

With Halloween approaching, a series of traumatic events set into motion a bloody trail of violence and mayhem. Under a hypnotic trance, Arthur Broecker isn't completely sure what he is doing, as he points a gun at his loving wife. He blindly pulls the trigger and fires a storm of bullets at his spouse. Still following orders, Arthur continues his murder spree and hunts down his own daughter.



Some of the gentle townsfolk are starting to remember the screams from the past Halloween. With just fragmented memories in his head, Jack Westerman decides to leave the small town in a hurry. No matter how many different routes he takes, Jack always ends up in the same spot. He drives around aimlessly in circles, hoping to find an exit. Something is preventing him from leaving his hometown; keeping him trapped, like a rat in a maze.

Jeremy “Jezz” DePlage wakes up scared from his deep sleep. He suddenly finds himself lying in a hospital bed. Seven years have passed, with most of the town having entirely forgotten about him. Visitors are marching toward his hospital room, killing patients and nurses along the way. During each Halloween, hungry witches have been feeding on the children. They drain the parents of their memories, making them forget they ever had kids. Jeremy is different than the rest because he is the only one who remembers everything.

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The imagery of these witches comes from classic cartoons and iconic drawings. These are old women with exaggeratedly wrinkled faces and elongated chins. They drag around broomsticks and wear pointy black hats. Their source of nourishment comes from eating the children alive.

BY WIZARD OAK’s narrative is structured in a sequence of viewpoints. Each resident provides a brief painful tale, how the parents were robbed of their memories of their children. Author Crowther focuses on building the bleak mood and dreary atmosphere of the town. Each page packs a wallop of heart-breaking emotion. Crowther has the ability to convey the joys and scares of a Halloween night. Readers will undoubtedly find an absorbing experience from start to finish. Out in stores now, you can order a copy of BY WIZARD OAK from the official website [here](#)

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