

MINT WATERSBLADE  
THE  
GRUDGE  
OF  
LEAP YEAR



THE  
GRUDGE  
OF  
LEAP YEAR



MINT WATERSBLADE  
THE  
GRUDGE  
OF  
LEAP YEAR

Translation by  
Jody Youd



© 2015 Mint Watersblade

COVER AND LAYOUT:

Kim Söderström 🐾 Graafinen Hukka

COVER IMAGE:

Shutterstock

PUBLISHER:

BoD – Books on Demand, Helsinki, Finland

MANUFACTURER:

BoD – Books on Demand, Norderstedt, Germany

ISBN:

978-952-330-208-2

## YOU DIDN'T KEEP YOUR PROMISE

Thousands of fireworks in numerous colours were going off in the sky. A woman staring at them, shut her eyes tight and swore a new year's resolution to herself. "This year I will be a better person".

The year started badly. The woman drove over a hare on a dark forest road. The following night the hare appeared in the woman's dream saying:

- You didn't keep your promise. You didn't keep your promise.

Soon the woman found out that things at work have not been going well for longer than she had realised. She was able to keep her job, but she did have to lay a lot of people off. The following night her former colleagues appeared in her dream. They kept on repeating:

- You didn't keep your promise. You didn't keep your promise.

The year carried on. Several incidents occurred which appeared in the woman's dreams. One day she had promised to watch her daughter's ballet recital, but had to stay late at work. That night the woman dreamt of the hare, her colleagues, her daughter. They kept on repeating:

- You didn't keep your promise. You didn't keep your promise.

Her daughter stepped in front of everyone else and screamed:

- And now we are going to kill you!

~~~~~  
*New Year's Day.*

JAN 2

## THE SHADOWS OF THE MOONS

Luna was standing in a field, staring up at the sky, trying to recognise constellations. It would've been very dark, but for the moon, which was full and bright, that gave off enough light to see by. Grandma had once said that during a full moon a person can melt into the moon's shadows and be trapped there forever. Luna thought of that as a funny fairy tale.

Returning home in the small hours, Luna unexpectedly met her neighbour, Johnny. They quickly said hello. Luna was afraid to say more even though she had fancied Johnny for quite a while.

In the morning, Luna sat down at the kitchen table while her mother was still calling her to come to breakfast.

- Here I am, Luna said, but her mother kept on calling.

- Luna! You have to get up now. You are going to be late for school.

A moment later, in the hallway, Luna made a horrific discovery. She couldn't see her reflection in the mirror. No matter how hard she looked, all she could see of herself was a small shadow on the floor. In horror, Luna ran out into the garden. Luna stared at Johnny's front door for a long time and waited. Finally the door opened but nobody could be seen. A small shadow moved across the sunlit grass.

Well, at least Luna wasn't alone.

---

*The first lunar probe, Luna 1, was launched in 1959.*

## THE MAGIC RING

Paul had a magic ring. He had inherited it from his grandfather, who had inherited it from his grandfather. No-one knew where great-great-great-grandfather had got it from. Paul's grandfather had said once that the ring wasn't quite from this world. That some strange creature had handed it over to great-great-great-grandfather. Paul had often wondered whether the creature had voluntarily handed the magic ring over.

What was so special about the ring then? When you slip the ring onto your finger, it turns the wearer invisible. Paul had used it in several difficult situations where it would be better to vanish into thin air. He carried the ring everywhere with him.

Today was one of those days when the ring was needed. Paul was working on his garden when he noticed his old great-uncle Gunnar approaching the house. Paul prayed to himself that Gunnar hadn't noticed him as he slipped the ring onto his finger. Gunnar came, knocked on the front door for a while, and then left. Paul sighed with relief.

Paul's joy didn't last for long as he realised that the ring was stuck on his finger. No matter how hard he pulled, it wouldn't come off. All afternoon, Paul tried everything he could think of to get the ring off, but it wouldn't budge off of his finger. And no matter how loud Paul cried and shouted, no-one could hear an invisible man. And he definitely didn't want to stay invisible for the rest of his life.

Finally, as a last resort, Paul grabbed a meat cleav-

er and chopped his forefinger off. He became visible again, but his invisible finger with the ring on couldn't be found. One day they might just appear somewhere else.

---

*J.R.R. Tolkien was born in 1892.*

## A STRANGE WEATHER FORECAST

Isaac was sitting on the sofa reading a biology book. The news was on the TV, but Isaac wasn't paying any attention to it. The news changed to the weather forecast, which didn't interest Isaac any more than the news did.

- At this point it seems that on Thursday the wind will bring a rain of rocks with it. All over the country, the wind may be so strong that it carries loose sand from the ground for kilometres.

Isaac started and wondered if he had heard correctly.

- Mum. Mum! He shouted - The TV said it will rain rocks on Thursday.

Mum stared at Isaac and wondered what to say.

- You must've heard wrong. You were so focused on your reading.

- No. I heard it right. That's what they said on the TV.

- OK. I promise to check it out online, mum answered, but she forgot.

Thursday came. Isaac stepped carefully out the front door, looked up at the sky, but no clouds could be seen. He didn't want to go to school, but of course he had to. Isaac didn't plan on going all the way to school, though. He hung out in a park a couple of blocks away and waited for his mother to leave for work.

Once his mother had left, Isaac sneaked back home. He sat by the window and stared intently at the garden. There were no clouds and the day was

beautiful, but Isaac wouldn't give up. He stared and stared. Waited. Eventually, it was so late that Dad's car drove up. Mum's car followed. Dad stepped out of the car and waited for mum, who stepped out of her car and hugged dad. Right then the sky opened and fist sized rocks started raining down.

---

*The Finnish Meteorological Institute gave its first 5-day weather forecast in 1965.*

“Emergency services, how can I help?” Rosa calls the emergency services, but the help she receives isn’t quite what she expected. An unexpected guest arrives to wish them a happy Valentine’s day. A faulty shot interrupts a football match. The water nymph wants something, but what?

*The Grudge of Leap Year* contains 91 frightening, cryptic or weird short stories. It starts off the Leap Year –series, which will have 366 stories - one for every day of the year.

