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*The*  
**Daily Boos**  
*-Spooky Edition!*



**IT'S ONLY  
4  
DAYS UNTIL  
Halloween**

**The Magicians' Secret**  
*The Man With The Ink Stained Gloves*

The offer had felt too good to be true. He had been escorted off the main streets by police, and when he tried to grab his hat of tips he took a punch to his eye for the trouble. Now he sat on a dirty street corner, wrapped in newspapers, no less hungry, and now in need of a hat. A pair of finely polished boots and a dark walking stick stopped directly in front of him. "Rough night?" The voice was like the burn of strong liquor on a cold night. Intoxicating and too much all at once. "You could say that." The street magician muttered, not daring to look the gentleman in the eyes. At best he was baiting him for arrest, at worst he was considering killing him before hunger did it first. The rich had the strangest sense of humor. "I'll change that for you. I need a good magician, you're quite talented. Work for me, and you're dreams will be a reality." Something about the way he said it so dismissively, made the magician's very soul shiver, his insides icy as if they'd been examined and exposed under the gentleman's gaze. He hesitated, twisting the offer around in his mind under the expectant, piercing eyes of his strange company. "I'm listening," he said, swallowing down the irrational dread that continued to rise in his throat. Looking up, he couldn't even make out the man's face between his upturned collar and top hat, only the glimmer of eyes in shadow. "I'll explain on the way to your new life, Mr-?" "Macabre." "Mr. Macabre." The man reached out a white-gloved hand, stained black with ink, and Mr. Macabre took it. It was another night at the theater, surrounded by golden lights and red curtains, applause, and roses. Macabre didn't know how to

explain it, he watched in awe as he pulled off the impossible, making it snow in the theater or turning tears into diamonds. It had been years since that deal with the unknown gentleman. He had traveled the world, had enough to eat, and though he had not a dollar to his name, he was always living comfortably. When he wished for a fine coat, one was left behind. When he wanted a son, his sister's illegitimate child had been placed in his care. Yet he was still without money or security. He found himself thinking about it more and more, as he saw the jewelry glitter in the crowd. He wished he could provide instead of giving leftovers. But he was living a trick in its own right. He seemed rich, but his debts were held over his body in the form of a puppeteer's string, and he longed to be cut free. His covetous thoughts were disturbed when a man of luxury made his way backstage. "Say, nice trick back there. How'd you do it?" He was not referring to true magic, that'd be the next act. No, he meant a card trick Macabre had known since he was a child. "I'm afraid I can't tell you that," Macabre said, bored and rehearsed. He was not the first to ask, nor would be the last. "I know who you are," the wealthy man implored. "I know what you do. Work for me, I'll offer you triple what your current contract is with a fourth of the hours. My wife adores your shows. You will be rich enough to buy a private beach, and your kid will be welcomed anywhere. Just tell me how you did it." He'd been sworn to keep quiet, to not share a detail. But this was something that predated the deal. It wasn't even real magic. Perhaps the opportunity was brought by the magic, after all, hadn't this been what he was wishing for?





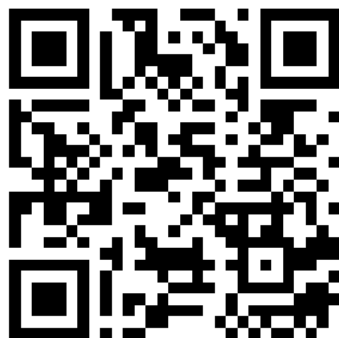
Besides, the deal was too good to be true. With an excited promise of good things to come, Mr. Macabre headed onto the stage feeling a warm tingle travel up his spine. He settled into the spotlight, and his hands stretched out from his side, the crowds silenced. "And now," His voice boomed proudly, "for my final act tonight! I shall-" he was cut off by a tickling sensation in his throat that crawled upward. He coughed hard but it stuck firmly. Choking, he hacked up a bright yellow scarf. It gleamed, perfectly dry. Much to Mr. Macabre's horror, he had no clue how to pull off this trick. His body heaved, violently trying to dislodge the rest of the scarf that disappeared into his mouth. He yanked, and a spool tore out, a blue followed the green, then a yellow, the pattern continued and he pulled them out viciously trying to free his airway. The crowds erupted in cheers, but it just kept coming. Panic rose with every sleeve of fabric. The next scarf should have been yellow, but it was a dirty brown, followed by a thick red. When his fingers pulled the surface, it rubbed off against his hand, to his horror he found a green scarf beneath the blood. He scrambled back, and the crowd gasped, someone screamed, but everyone sat frozen, unable to tear their eyes from the horrible magic. He pulled harder now, desperate to tear the scarf from within him. Tugging viciously as red turned into a near black, he hacked and heaved until he felt a harsh tug inside him as he pulled with all his strength. There was a moment of terrible silence, his heart the only thing he could hear as he yanked, unable to breathe. Finally, it gave with a burning rip inside of him. He fell forward, his body spasming. The audience watched, helpless as the man on the stage, until he stilled. The funeral had attendance in the thousands: they gathered around the coffin, placing keepsakes and love letters into his casket. One gentleman in particular stood for a long time until everyone left. His only audience was a young boy with red cheeks and teary eyes and a rich man holding his shoulder as if that gave the boy any comfort. With white-gloved hands, he placed a king of diamonds into Mr. Macabre's pocket, an inky thumbprint resting in the corner, and on the other side, it was written...

**A magician never reveals his secrets.**

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