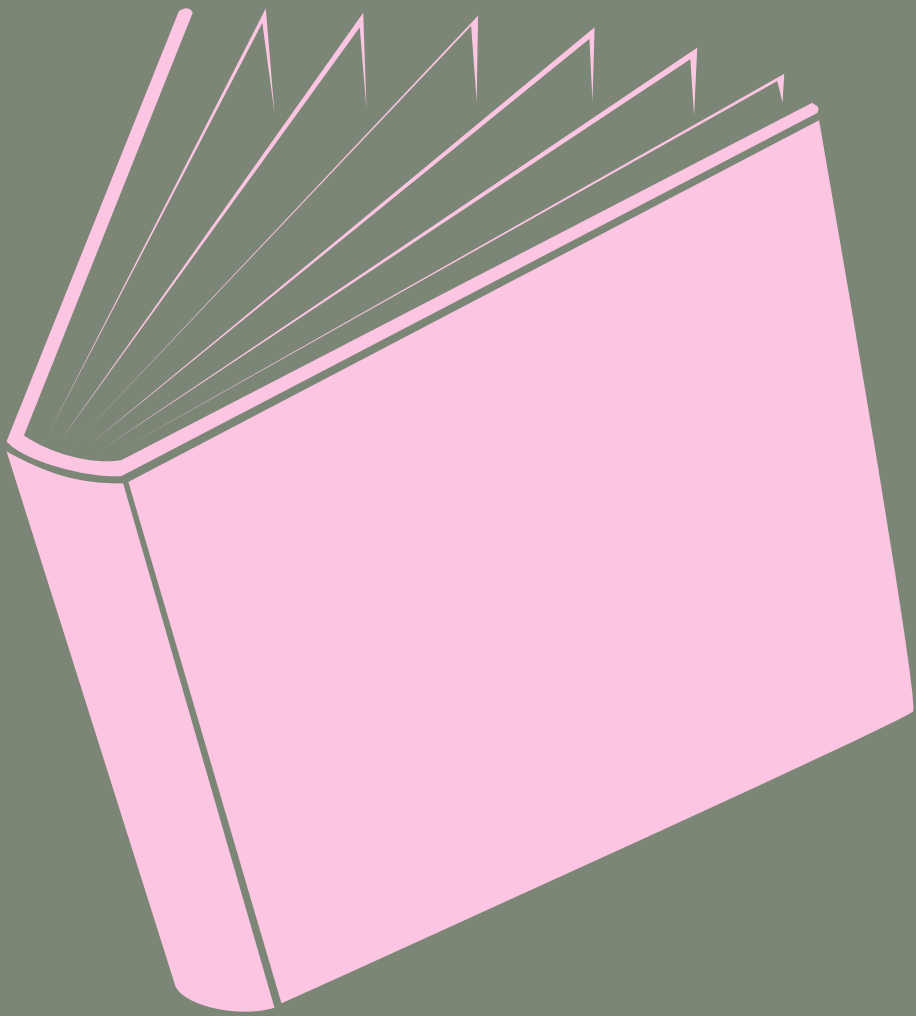


A LITTLE BOOK OF LITTLE STORIES



BY SAWYER TREAT

An American Dilemma

You wouldn't think peanut butter would be so important to someone. But as the saying goes, you don't know what you had until you've lost it. I lost peanut butter the day I moved from the United States to the United Kingdom, and I've missed it ever since. I miss a lot of things since coming the UK: Pizza Rolls, decent coffee creamer, pancakes, a wonderful place called Target, and so much more on the endless list of American luxuries.

Now don't get me wrong, Peanut butter exists here in England. Only, not the good kind; the correct kind. I realize that my opinion may sound ignorant or even haughty but you can make your official judgment after you too go on a hunt for peanut butter through the city of London to find one brand that even slightly contends with the beauties that is Jif and Skippy. If you're a London native, you may be asking yourself why I don't just go to any of the American themed stores throughout the area that do in fact sell good peanut butter. Well, there's a simple answer for this. I am not so desperate that I will spend €6.89 on a 16oz bottle when back in the states I can get a 40oz bottle for what is the equivalent of €4.32. I may yearn for the American delicacy that is buttered peanuts, but I am also an extremely poor university student. I know where my line is drawn. Thus, the request for a tub of Jif as a Christmas present will be made to my parents this year, as well as space reserved in my suitcase if and whenever I decide to take a visit to the grand ol' U S of A.

London Lovers

Her name is Maya Wells. A short woman, who wears colorful clothes, and thick square eyeglasses. She was born and raised in London, seeing the ups and downs of the city during her many years in it. She and her husband had retired just a few years ago, leaving her days free to roam around her favorite parts of the city. On Saturday afternoons she likes to take her knitting to Hyde Park and find a bench to work on. Maya enjoys watching the tourists explore, the little kids who come to play, and the pet owners who brings their dogs to stretch their legs. On occasion someone would stop while passing by to comment on the intricate designs of her scarf, which would earn a bright smile from her and made her day each time. Her husband, Julian, who she has been married to for the last 40 years would always come looking for her around 2pm. He would bring her lunch and sit with her while she ate. This was the real reason she went out each day. So that Julian would also get some fresh air. She knew that if not for his concern for her apatite, he wouldn't take care of his own doctors order to exercise every day. Him taking care of her is her way of taking care of him.

A stranger secretly lived in my home.

It happened when I was in my twenties. I was living alone in an apartment in Washington State. At first it was small things that I noticed. Lights turning on by themselves, door being closed when I know I left them open, and things not being where I felt them. I didn't mind it so much in the beginning, I thought it was my fault. I'm a forgetful person after all, it wasn't completely out of the question. It was when I started waking up in the middle of the night to a figure standing at the foot of my bed that I knew that something was off. The first couple of times I assumed that it was bad dreams. Until my brother slept over, telling me about the same dream the next morning.

At that moment I felt sick, me seeing it was one thing but the both of us was another. My brother offered up the idea of someone living in my house, which was a terrifying thought, but there was no way. I didn't have an attic or any crawlspaces for a person to be hiding in. There was only one explanation.

Ghosts. And there was only one way to deal with the supernatural in our family. Call my sister-in-law.

She acted like a real-life ghost buster, showing up like she was the police; speeding the whole way and pulling up like the place was on fire. We took a walk through the entire house, her mumbling to herself the whole time. When we were done, she pulled a sage sticker from her purse and handed me it while telling me that I had a powerful spirit living with me and that the smoke should keep it at bay.

Needless to say, I moved out the following month.