

**THIRD PLACE, YOUTH FLASH FICTION**  
**MADELINE STEADMAN**

## The Book Lover's Curse

*Location: School Yard    Prop: An Old Book    Line Portion: "not for you"*

June Woodman was an ordinary girl at an ordinary school living an ordinary life until she wasn't.

"Ring" chimed Lewis Elementary School's bell. Shouts of joy and laughter filled the school yard as the hundreds of students poured out the big dark gray doors. June walked straight to the big oak tree right by the steel fence reading one of her favorite books, *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* by C.S. Lewis.

"What you readin' little baby? Learning how to recite the alphabet?" sneered Jack, one of the meanest and most feared bullies at Lewis Elementary. "Give me that trash!" he said as he ripped the book from June's hands.

"No it's not trash give it back!" screamed June. "It's not for you!"

"Oh, it's not for you, give it back" said Jack, mockingly. He put the book on the ground and drenched it in water. Then Jack handed it back to her, "Here is your book June," then he laughed and walked off.

June went back to the oak tree. She went to sit down but the surface is abnormally hard. She turns around and sees an old book entitled, *The Book Lovers Curse*. "Well what could this be?" said June, puzzled. She slowly opened the book and read.

Congratulations! You are a book lover and you have been entrusted with The Book Lover's Curse. With this you can punish your enemies. Just repeat after me:

"You have wronged the rightest, for this you must be punished, until you give me what is mine, the bells will forever chime"

June thought that this was one of the most peculiar books she had ever seen but she also was very clever and knew this would show Jack the error of his ways. So she said the spell. Immediately after she finished the bell rang. She headed inside enthusiastically. She was excited for the next day.

Jack was one year older than June so she only saw him at recess. When the bell rang for recess the next day she was expecting Jack to have a pig's nose or something. But when June stepped out onto the school yard Jack was not there. "Eh, I probably just made him sick or something".

But, the next day he was not there nor the next nor the one after that. "Oh no, I might have hurt him," she thought. "Maybe the book might be able to tell me something." June rummaged in her book bag until she found *The Book Lover's Curse*. She then sat down to read the book.

Ha! You foolish mortal if you can not help him by the time the twelfth bell rings you will both die.

"Well, I must go save him," said June. A faint ring sounds in the distance. "Oh, that must be the first bell. How should I save him then?" June thought to herself. Suddenly a voice came into her mind.

It is jack. "June save me!" the voice yelled.

"How?" She thought to herself.

"You need to take away his power!"

"What? What is his power?"

"You."

"I don't understand"

"He uses you to his advantage, he takes away your power until you will do everything he says."

Then a scary voice fills June's mind "He doesn't deserve your help. You are bad. You are nothing."

June started to feel the light inside her dim. It felt like she was being consumed in darkness and pain". But, June knew she had the power to rise up and that she had to fight. "Follow me!" said the scary voice. "Join me! Think about it, no one likes you, not even your parents."

"No!" said June, loud and clear.

"What?" said the voice.

"I said, No! I am stronger and braver than you. My parents do like me. And yes, I make mistakes but that is just part of life. I am strong and I will rise up. I will keep fighting no matter what. You will not hurt me!" Her words drowned out the evil voice as she burned up *The Book Lover's Curse*. Jack reappeared and they hugged.

One year later Jack and June are now good friends. Jack has apologized to all the people he hurt and now is a very kind and compassionate person plus a great friend as for June she is more confident now that she has found her self power she knows now that she can rise up.