



## Stories of Stuff

**The Dead Book**  
**by Joshua Edwards**  
**as told by Pete**



Pete added his name to the Dead Book. The last name.

He'd left the Tavern, finally, after fifteen years. In a couple of weeks, thirteen other members of staff were leaving too. The connection between these two exits he had decided to see as complimentary; for years he'd said he held the place together and here was vindication. His leaving was like the crows leaving the tower.

He contemplated putting their names in too, but decided against it. It seemed fitting that his would be the last name added. Besides, how many of them would actually leave? Martyn had left and come back once before, Polly was going off to uni but summer jobs were useful and Maggie? Maggie he reckoned was just saying she was leaving to be part of the gang. She almost certainly just wanted people to tell her how much they'd miss her.

Fifteen years ago, Kris and Jay had sat at the end of the bar as he finished the close. They were giggling as they scribbled into their faux leather order pads, the ones they used to use that were just a little too large for any pocket on a garment made for a human.

They were compiling a list, as men often do.

A list that focused on women, as men often do.

It was a list of top ten Tavern 'hotties', but Pete pointed out to them that none of the women listed thus far worked at the Tavern anymore. So, it morphed into a list of people that had left the Tavern, and Pete just kept on adding to it.

There were rules; only front of house and kitchen members, if you leave and come back you don't go in twice (because that kind of voodoo leads to zombies) and all names listed in order of leaving (except for the night of 'The Purge.' Those names went in no particularly order as they were fired all at once.)



# THE WRITERS' BLOCK

Rarely were real names used, usually nicknames or some offensive moniker the meanings of which have become a mystery over time.

Pete had considered passing the tome along as he left, but decided instead to keep it. A reminder of a life he was leaving behind and a keepsake to remind him that it wasn't always awful there.

He placed it in a cardboard box, between two stacks of graphic novels and closed it up. Where he was going, they didn't even have a Whitbread Inn and that suited him just fine.

*Based on the Dead Book shared by Pete, former bar manager of the Liskeard Tavern.*

Stories of Stuff is a community arts project discovering the stories inspired by treasured objects. It has been created by The Writers' Block.

