

SCOTT ZARCINAS

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FINNEGAN'S CAT

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For My Girls

*“Short stories are tiny windows into other worlds
and other minds and other dreams. They are
journeys you can make to the far side of the
universe and still be back in time for dinner.”*

— Neil Gaiman

FINNEGAN'S CAT

GORDAN FINNEGAN is one of those guys with the unfortunate knack of attracting oddities. He even admits to being odd, but that he can't help it; it's in his genes. Take, for instance, his birth. His entire family is from Blarney, a tiny village just outside Cork, in Ireland, except him. He was born thirty thousand feet above the Pacific while his family were on the way to visit relatives in New Zealand, approximately where the dateline bisects the world into today and tomorrow.

Consequently, nobody knows what day he arrived non-manifested in the second-class cabin. Which was a problem because the month was February, but Gordon doesn't mind. He celebrates every leap year birthday on the twenty-ninth and every other birthday on the twenty-eighth. It's just one of his oddities.

Furthermore, when Gordon was nine, he fell down a disused mineshaft whilst taking a shortcut through the fields to the post office. That all the kids in the village knew these particular fields were littered with bottomless mineshafts, that they were all terrified of falling into one and never being found alive, was of little significance to Gordon. Even then he was a fatalist.

"If I die, I die," he often said. "If it's my time, it's my time."

Needless to say, Gordon fell down the first disused mineshaft he happened upon. He was with his dog, a Labrador called Nixon, who didn't seem to notice Gordon's absence. This wasn't seen as odd until several hours later when Gordon's older sister caught Nixon urinating on the door to the post office. Shelly promptly walked the dog home (avoiding the field of mineshafts, naturally), only to be confronted in the kitchen by her parents.

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