



The Wish

Diane Hoh

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High on a hillside overlooking Salem University, sits Nightingale Hall. Nightmare Hall, the students call it. Because that's where the terror began...

Alex is the first to notice the strange little booth in the campus pizza place. *Wishes granted, fortunes told* says the sign. Inside sits The Wizard, an eerie wooden figure with sinister blue eyes.

Alex's friends all make wishes. And, one by one, their wishes come true - but in terrifying, twisted ways. Could The Wizard be behind the horror? Or is it someone else - someone with a deadly wish all of their own?

The Wish Details

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Paula Brandon says

The Wish is one of the infrequent Nightmare Hall books with a supernatural element. While I often wasn't too fond of the supernatural Point Horror offerings, Diane Hoh usually handled them pretty well (e.g. *The Accident*). This involves Alex suspecting that a Wizard Wishing Machine (or something) is behind the accidents hurting her friends - The Wizard grants wishes in strange and terrifying ways! It's a bit silly, but it's fun. There are some terrific moments, though, my favourite being when The Wizard spits out a message saying "The wheels on the bus go round and round" shortly after Alex survives a scary bus ride. Sinister and creepy!

Patrick Ellard says

Good entry into the series by Diane Hoh about a group of college students using a wishing booth containing an evil looking wizard to make wishes to improve their lives. Unfortunately for them, the wishes begin to come true in ways they weren't quite expecting. very well written with interesting characters and good plot, the only thing that lets this book down is its weak enough ending. Otherwise it's a solid read and well worth your time.

Cherry Smith says

Awesome story

My favorite of all the Nightmare Hall books. An excellent read. The characters come to life and the storyline is fascinating.

Sharon says

Rating: 3.5

I was a little wary of reading Point Horror books again after so many years - it's at least 16 years if not more since I've picked one up.

I can see how I devoured these so quickly as a teen - they're a great read. This one, written by Diane Hoh, is standard Point Horror fare.

The pizza place on Campus at Salem University has just acquired a creepy fortune-telling wizard booth thing. I'm pretty sure it's the same kind of thing that featured in the Tom Hanks movie *Big* - you put in a quarter, pull a lever, and it spits out a card with a fortune on it. Alex is really unnerved by the wizard, she finds it creepy and doesn't have a go at getting her fortune told - unlike all her friends.

One by one, her friends ask the Wizard for a look into their future or put in a request for something they want. And one by one, their wishes are granted - but not in ways they expected. As Alex remains skeptical that the wizard is responsible, she becomes increasingly aware that someone is trying to get rid of her - is the wizard really powerful, or is someone closer to her messing with her mind?

I thought this book would be really dated, considering it's from 1995, but save for a mention of a suede vest/blouse combo, it's not dated at all and it's really enjoyable. I love how these books build tension slowly and keep you guessing right until the end.

08allyd says

this book was one of the most exciting books i have ever read. The story is based on a collage group that goes to a pizza store. While they are there a girl named alex sees something unusual. she goes over there with her group of friends. it is a wizard in a box. they all make a wish except alex. Jenny Alex's friend wishes for a prettier face. When they ride back to the campus there was a bad wind storm. while jenny was driving a big tree fell over and jenny broke every single bone in her face. now she has to get a face job. well she is going to get a prettier face but it cam true in a twisted way. you will have to figure out how the others survive their twisted fortunes.

Elizabeth Hubble says

This one had a little bit too much paranormal stuff for me without any real explanation. It might have worked if the Wizard had been explained more.

Alex says

For whatever reason this was my favorite Nightmare Hall book as a kid, so I was very excited to get a chance to re-read it. I still think the premise is great (be careful what you wish for!) but the ending was much weaker than I remember and actually made no sense at all.

I'm giving this 4 stars, though, because it was my favorite and the one I remember the most about. Plus, the main character's name is Alex.

Emma says

I love Diane Hoh's book and I know I won't have been disappointed in this one, although it doesn't stick in my mind as being as good as The Train, it was definitely a fun read.

Natasha ?? says

Really liked this book, definitely want to read more Point Horror books.

Lauri says

This was the book that really got me started on reading back when I was just in middle school. I fell in love with it and the whole series that it was apart of. Just by chance a friend gave it to me and all else is history. The Nightmare Hall series is still my most treasured collection, that I own.

Koralyn says

Just plain weird, and that's saying something considering I'm obsessed with anything even vaguely supernatural. To be honest, this book bored me.

Vicki says

Creepy little tale much more than a whodunit.

Mimi says

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I've read 5 of the Nightmare Hall books (Silent Scream in 2011, The Roomate in 2011, Guilty in 2012, Scream Team 2009 and Pretty Please last week) and nearly all of Diane's stand-a-lone Point Horror books. In my opinion she's one of the series' best writers and I wasn't disappointed by this novel.

The Wish begins in a setting that appears in all the Nightmare Hall books but rather to an over-kill point in this one (8 TIMES) - Vinnie's Pizzeria which is basically a less superior version of The Dari Burger (SV) but specialising in pizza's instead.

Our main character Alex - whom is a plain jane (typical point horror) - stumbles across The Wizard, a creepy beyond belief fortune telling booth, that she happens to be afraid of due to a fortune telling incident when she was 9 - so random.

As she's quaking in fear at this 'harmless' antique her posse approaches including the Sweet Valley Twins ! Not really but Julie and Jenny (why is there always a Jenny/Jennifer in Point Horror books?) are dead-ringers for the Californian beauties - long blonde hair, one twin is studious and often wears blouses and the other lives to party and is addicted to dating.

Other honourable characters I'll mention are Kiki, whose name even sounds bitchy. Kiki is known for her bitchiness and constantly failing diets. And Marty whom Alex is besotted with.

Back to the story - 2 of the characters decide to make wishes and get their fortunes told. Julie wishes for an exotic face - you definitely wouldn't catch Jessica Wakefield wishing for that - and her fortune card reads "BEWARE THE LOOKING GLASS, LEST YOU SEE YOUR TRUE REFLECTION". Gabe, Julie's boyfriend and your typical jock, wishes for wheels and his card says "SLOW AND STEADY WINS THE RACE".

2 more of the characters are about to make wishes when suddenly a power cut strikes because of a raging storm happening outside. When the lights finally turn back on the students decide to return to their dorms. But not all of them make it...

Julie crashes the car into a tree lying across the road and her face is completely destroyed. Gabe's confined to a wheelchair. Alex realises their fortunes have come true !

The next day the remnants of the gang are at Vinnie's again and Kiki wishes to be 5 pounds thinner. Her fortune card reads "SELF-DISIPLINE IS THE GREATEST OF ALL VIRTUES".

They then venture to the hospital visit Gabe, Julie and Jenny (who stayed overnight because she didn't want to leave her sister). But before Alex can reach the room she hears a blood-curdling scream from Julie's room - Poor Jenny's learnt she's missed a trip to Vinnie's! Only joking this book may be far-fetched but not that much.

Inside she discovers twins fighting over a snake patterned mirror that was gifted to Julie anonymously - possibly by a snake in the grass ?

After this fiasco Jenny decides not to protect her twin from this creepy Santa but chooses to return to the dorm instead. Meanwhile Alex goes to her job at the radio station and Kyle closes the door to the radio booth with Alex inside. During her radio work she receives an anonymous request to play the song "Who's sorry now?" for Julie.

She ends her shift rather abruptly after this - just because Julie may have a psycho after her doesn't mean you should be slacking on the job Alex - but the door to the booth is locked. To the reader Kyle is looking pretty shifty but Alex dismisses his involvement and tries to phone for help.

Predictably the line is dead and darkness suddenly descends upon the radio station. This next part now is a bit weird : an unexplainable wind tries to drag Alex off the balcony that's connected to the radio booth. Seriously Diane ?

Fortunately the head of the radio stations saves her and so the next day she's recovered enough to go to - drum roll please - Vinnie's ! During their pizza Alex has several bitchy thoughts (that are repeated several times throughout the book) about Kiki eating the most out of anyone on the table. I thought Kiki was supposed to be the bitchy one !

Alex forgets her resentment towards The Wizard by having her own fortune told with Marty. Marty wishes to not have to do an upcoming speech. Alex doesn't wish for anything which is a bit strange considering the title of the book. They both get the same card that reads "SILENCE IS GOLDEN".

Now this was when I started getting my suspicions about Bennet - a member of the group who badly damaged his legs in a previous accident that is never explained (so much for back stories) so wears crutches and is always groaning about his inability to play football due to the crutches-who is the only one who hasn't visited the Wizard.

The next day it's time for another group outing not to Vinnie's this time - SHOCKER ! - but to a football game. During the intermission Alex receives phone that tells her to "Take me seriously or you'll regret it "The voice is disguised of course - it always is in point horror books - but Kiki later admits that it was her who called intending for it to be a joke about Alex's refusal to take The Wizard seriously - her bitchy side has finally been unleashed!

While the others go to Vinnie's, Alex goes to a party back at the dorms. And sees Kyle being thrown over the balcony... I should point out this is a plot hole because Kyle is written to be at Vinnie's and so is the thrower who I'll reveal shortly.

Alex decides to investigate to see if any clues to the identity of the thrower are on the balcony - wow Alex look at you giving Nancy Drew a run for her money - after Kyle's been carted to the hospital in a coma. She finds a shiny gold football medallion (hence the cover) in a plant pot and discovers that it's the same design that was given to every member of the football squad. Including : Gabe, Kyle, Bennet (who's now looking SUPER FISHY) and Marty.

The next day whilst she's visiting her friends at the hospital she illegally searches through Kyle's belongings to see if the one that she found is his. It's not as Kyle's as it's amongst his possessions but before she begins to question the other suspects Kiki collapses in the ward (how convenient ?) and is hospital due to her dangerous weight. Karma's a bitch and so is Kiki.

This certainly doesn't stop the gang visiting Vinnie's - I swear that place would be bankrupt without them - and Alex gets each suspect alone to ask them about the football charm. They all claim to have lost it. Seriously Diane,everyone's so careless?

Alex gets the shuttle bus home from Vinnie's as she's lost her friends and finds that it's completely empty with the exception of the driver. As soon as she's inside he begins careening the bus at high speed like a maniac. When they reach the woodland near Nightmare Hall ,the same place as the car accident, he jumps out. Magically the police appear moments later to save Alex.

To cheer Alex up the following day the friends go to Vinnie's - seriously Diane ? what sort of diets do these kids have - and thus begins Alex's strange shouting rant with the Wizard about why all this is happening to her .Suddenly a fortune card comes out of the machine ,and I swear at the time I read this a shiver went down my spine , that reads "THE WHEELS ON THE BUS GO ROUND AND ROUND".

Frightened , Alex pleads for Marty to take her home but changes her mind and wants to go to the hospital instead to check if Kyle's jewel football is still there for a reason that remains unexplained. Of course ,as anyone could have guessed, the football has miraculously vanished !

We then come to the worst 'scary' scene ever :it has come to the time when Marty has to deliver his speech but his voice has gone , taken by a voice stealer it seems.

If you're like me you may have worked out now that a bad thing has happened to everyone but Bennet. Way to make it obvious Diane!

To make me even more convinced that Bennet is behind all these 'accidents' his ex-girlfriend tells Alex that she had Bennet's football charm and only just gave it back to him.

Alex then goes to Vinnie's thankfully for the final time and confronts the Wizard again - like any 'sane' person would. He starts sending her fortune cards that say things like "You dare threaten me ?".

Gabe appears and points his crutch at her and she realises that she's forgotten a majorly important detail of the night Kyle was thrown from the balcony....

The weird length of the throwers arm.Exactly the length of the crutch Gabe has and Bennet but Alex has completely overlooked Bennet so is convinced Gabe is the perputraitor. Alex is knocked unconscious by an unknown and when she awakes she finds herself in the storage closet of Vinnie's.

As it is unlocked she quickly escapes and the Wizard is directly in front over her screaming -yes he can talk and if you're like me and petrified of creepy dolls (thank you Poltergeist) you'll be having nightmares tonight - that she and her friends are responsible for everything that has happened.

Alex spots a crutch poking out from behind the Wizards booth - thank god the Wizard wasn't the one talking - and she assumes obviously that it's Gabe. Out pops ... Bennet! I KNEW IT.

Bennet explains that the Wizard telepathetically told him to cause all the accidents and his legs would be fixed allowing him to play football again. The Wizard did the humanly impossible things like making Marty lose his voice. Seriously Diane?

Bennet is carted off to a mental hospital before he can do his final deed to the wizard - killing Alex - and the book ends with the Wizard being sold to a burger joint owner - The Dari Burgers' possibly ? - who's unaware of the terror it will cause.

My rating of the wish - 3.5 stars

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Sunny says

Creepy with a dash of reality and college drama. "Be careful what you wish for" is the main theme of this book. College students make wishes on an antique fortune-telling wizard in a booth and later find that they start coming true in violent, twisted ways. Actually, only the main character and the antagonists see the pattern. It flies too much in the face of logic to believe that a antique machine can be behind the tragic events unfolding, right? Well, the main character thinks so but later comes to the realization that not everything can be answered through logic. Finding out the motives behind the tragic events was a bit anti-climatic. There is little detective work as Alex tries to figure out who the human culprit is but nothing substantial like a detective story. In short, I thought this was a good, short read if a reader is in the mood for a story where wishes goes bad.

Stefanie Stokes says

An interesting one this, I liked the idea of a benevolent machine :)
