

Christopher M...

126

Adult

Preface: Brit and I play Wheel of Fortune on the Switch a few times a week and have noticed that the host sometimes stares off into dead space after delivering one of his canned platitudes - I came up with the idea of this host being the only one in that world with any sort of cognizance of his situation, and that's where this short story comes from :)



I have no name. No family to call my own, nothing outside of this one room, suspended in the bleak emptiness.

Most of the time there is nothing but darkness. A stasis in which I remain, my partner and I, held fast within space and time. We wear the same clothes most of the time. Every great now and then I find myself *changed* by something unseen - a new tie around my neck, a new suit coat over my shoulders. My partner's dress a new fabric, a new pattern - but while sometimes we are different, most of the time we stay painfully, miserably the *same*.



But there are also days of horrible, unexpected light. A brilliant, blinding light that rises on tides of swelling brass instruments. Lights flash amidst the cacophony, and I walk out with my partner to face three more individuals cast to us on the winds of fortune.

My partner departs, silent as ever, and stands before the great wall of letters. She nods stoically and I take my place to begin the proceedings.

Introductions - the same phrases, no matter who stands before us. The unseen hand controls their appearances, the same unseen hand that changes our clothing and our scenery. They say no words, no pleasantries, but I greet them kindly all the same.

The game begins, a wheel spins, puzzles are solved. With each round's completion, we draw closer and closer to silence once more.

"You did great! Where did you pull that answer from?" I ask of one of the contestants. They smile at me, clutch at their invisible hearts with joy, but say nothing at all. Just once I wish they would speak back to me. My partner across the room nods and smiles, but she too says nothing at all.

Another round ends. The sounds of applause resonate throughout the room but there is no audience - just a mirthless, unending emptiness that stretches into the abyss.

There is always a winner of each game, and this time is no different. The silent contestant joins me before the wall of letters, smiling blithely. There is always a prize, usually the same prize, sometimes different, but what value is there in money in a world with no meaning such as this?

Letters are guessed, my partner touches the board and letters appear. The puzzle is solved, confetti falls from the black ceiling above us. The contestant raises their arms in victorious joy, and the sounds of applause once again rattle through around me.

But there is no audience. There are no prizes. These amorphous contestants will dissolve soon and take their joy with them, and my partner and I will return to the cold blackness of the void. It encroaches across the gleaming tiled floor. The contestant turns to me, their joyous visage now unrecognizable, as if a thumb has smeared ink across it - their features are unremarkable and unknowable.

My partner nods once as she understands what comes next.

The letter board disappears into the shattering darkness, followed by the large video screens and the festive Hawaiian decor. The wheel follows, the podiums thereafter, and even if I wanted to run for an exit, there would be no way out.

I stare into the void, and it stares back at me.



Alicia C.

7400 T

Colorado Springs, 80905

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Age: 31y/o

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Title: 'A Tear for What Cannot be Undone'

*There's a place I know where people are stacked in boxes in a neat row.*

*There there they live in fear*

*Fear of me*

*fear of them*

*fear of now*

*fear of then*

*But to those who are ready to repent I release to them a single tear.*

*It swims from my face and forms a tiny sphere*

*Just a black pill for them to be released from then and here.*

1

"No!" Mari sobbed exasperated. "Don't take anything from him dont even touch it!" She clawed the sides of her head squeezing her brown hair in the shock and disbelief of what she was witnessing.

"I have to Mari, I am so sorry but I can't live with it anymore. This is my way out." Alan turned his attention back to the disheveled man in this apartment living room and with shaking hands accepted the small black pill forming in front of him. The man sitting in his living room was weak and struggled to walk upright. He wreaked of what Alan assumed was manure. However, he was unaware of any livestock in the area and thought it may be the man's own filth that filled his tiny apartment. He wore tattered jeans and a once white shirt that was so torn it could hardly be considered clothing anymore. His skin was covered in a layer of dirt and grime so thick it was impossible to tell what color his skin was but the wrinkles, as they do for us all eventually, lay unrepressed across his forehead and down his cheeks with a notable absence of smile lines and crows feet. His eyes had swelled with black tears as he looked at Alan. In a black vaper that swirled like thick smoke the tears swam off of his face and formed a solid black ball.

Despite his appearance, Mari and Alan felt a power exuding from the man. They did not feel pity for his apparent situation but fear of the cruel authority he somehow had over them.

"I know as well as you, Alan, what has brought me here. Do I need to say it in front of your sister? Would you like me to be the one who tells her? That is one of the mercies I offer." The man said in his low raspy voice. He scounded like he hadn't had a sip of water in days.

"No no that's alright." and Alan turned to his sister with tear filled eyes expressing a wordless apology. It hurt him to see the expression on her face. She was scared, her face was carved of fear. Somehow without anyone saying it they all knew the man had only come for Alan and that Alan's fate would be horrific. What only Mari did not know was why. What had her brother done to warrant such a visitor.

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As Alan stood there rolling the tiny ball in his palm which, also without explanation, he knew to be a pill for him to swallow, he thought of what had led him to where he was and wondered if he hadn't moved to the Evergreen apartments if this man would have ever found him. The apartments had a bad reputation not only for the kinds of people who lived there but for the constant stream tragedies that happened there. No one lives there except



out of desperation and even then many would rather be homeless. The evidence of drugs is laid out on the front steps with rolling eyes and incoherent pleas. The suicides are made public by the bodies rolled out under white sheets at the very least weekly. Violent assaults have blue and white lights upfront all hours of the day and night.

Alan was unfortunately one of the desperate and struggling that had nowhere else to go. Years of heroin addiction cost him his family, his friends, many jobs, and his ability to support himself. Even so, he had been five months sober and he was able to get himself a job as a clerk at the gas station, QuickEez, on the corner of his street. He always heard talk about what happened at Evergreen. People would tell him to leave while he still can, otherwise he will be leaving under one of those white sheets. That the place is haunted and if someone else or himself doesn't kill him first the spirits will get him and that was worse. He tried not to pay any mind though. After all things were looking up, he was keeping his nose clean - literally - and it was temporary he had no plans to settle in there for the rest of what he planned to be a long life. This was his second chance.

During the day if Alan couldn't pick up an extra shift at the QuikEez he would try to spend time away from the apartments. Away from the screams of domestic abuse, away from the sirens and the lights. Any chance he got he would spend time with his sister, Mari. She was the only family that had not given up on him. Only 18 months apart in age they were always close growing up and still got along like the best of friends.

"I really can't tell you how proud I am of you." They had been sitting on a park bench and laughing at two little boys playing with invisible lightsabers and exchanging the wittiest trash talk 6 year olds can come up with. She always got emotional when she observed her brother laughing and engaging like he used to before the years of addiction transformed him. This always made Alan uncomfortable though.

"Thank you." Alan said and he left it at that not knowing what else to say. He wished so badly everyone could just treat him the way they did before and not bring up this thing that was nothing but shame for him.

"I know you don't like to talk about it so I won't go on. I just want you to know I love you and that I am proud of you and always will be." She continued hesitantly "and I know mom and dad are too. They love you, they just need more time."

This was his cue to bow out and head home. He smiled gratefully knowing she only means well. "I know they do. I know you do and we all know I love you all." He was trying not to sound sarcastic but it always seemed to bleed into his tone. "Do you think you can drive me home? I have the 4am shift tomorrow and I want to get back to get my chores done so I can get to bed early."

"Ooo look at you! So responsible now." Mari said playfully and unable to staunch the condescension from bleeding into her tone. "Of Course I'll drive you home but I hope it won't be home for too much longer. The thought of you living there gives me nightmares sometimes."

At night Evergreen was just as lively with the noise, and the lights. The hall lights leading to his apartment door flickered constantly and since the door wasn't hung right there was about two inches of space underneath where he could see the flickering all night long. The mold speckled the walls and roof but Alan had gotten used to the smell. He put a dining chair, the only one he had under the front door handle in case anyone tried to break in. No one ever did, no one at Evergreen has anything worth stealing but sometimes someone would get high and confused and try to open the door thinking it was their apartment.



The worst part of staying there at night was since he could hardly sleep he had nothing to do but think and what he thought about most was all of the mistakes he made that had brought him there. One in particular took center stage every night. The gasps, the begging, the tears, the dirt, the struggling to move, and then the silence, the stillness it all played vividly in his mind. His one great secret, his biggest regret. *No matter how much you change this is what makes you a monster deep down. You can't ever come back from that. And neither will she.*

Linnette Evans was a beautiful 19 year old college freshman. She was studying Economics and had a dream to one day be in politics. She prided herself in being independent, outspoken and opinionated. One day she had left campus to get lunch in between classes and didn't come back. Two days later she was found in the trees behind the campus beaten and strangled. The police never found any credible leads or evidence to arrest anyone for the crime. The only people who would ever know what happened to her were Linnette and Alan.

*I didn't mean for it to go so far. She wasn't supposed to die. If she had just listened just held still and stopped screaming I wouldn't have had to try to keep her quiet.*

That day Alan had been to his buddy Cal's house using. Cal offered him another drug and told him it was "great to mix." Already high Alan thought "Fuck it worst thing that will happen is it'll kill me and I'll be done with his shit life for good." Instead it made Alan feel invincible like he was made of armor. Anything he wanted he could take it because if anyone tried to stop him he'd take them. He found Linnette walking and decided he'd take her. And just like that, a simple grab of the arm and a few threatening words she was his and her life was over.

The reality of what he had done didn't sink in until he saw the news reports of the missing woman with her photo attached. He had barely remembered the day and it felt like a fading dream and then suddenly it felt like a brick had hit him in the face as he remembered every detail of what he did to her and the look on her face, pure fear. Something he had never seen before and it was sickening to remember and he would never be able to forget it.

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Alan rolled the pill in his hand admiring the shine, he saw that it shimmered with tiny sparkles and thought about how something so beautiful could cause so much pain and relieve it at the same time.

"It's time." sighed the bedraggled man sitting on his couch. "You have stalled long enough and others here await my visit. You know what to do." He sounded more bored like his visits have been the same for a thousand years calling him to the tears and pleas and hesitation.

"Good bye Mari." Alan swallowed the pill before she could reach him to try and stop him. Instantly he dropped to the ground and started to shake. "No! Please please please!" he cried trying to crawl back. "Help!" he screamed. And suddenly he couldn't breathe it was as if something was pressing on his neck. "Please stop please just stop you don't have to please." He choked the words out low fighting for breathe, paralyzed in pain as Mari screamed over him in horror and the old man sat unperturbed and watched him struggle. Finally, Alan laid still, lifeless on the apartment floor. The old man stood up and began to leave. As he approached the door he turned to Mari and said "The pain we sow in life we reap in death."

5

"A drug overdose. Just got the toxicology report back, Officer Waller."

"No surprise there. It has to be at least the fifth overdose death this month from Evergreen. It's time they shut that place down."



"I know it. I think that pretty much confirms the sisters' explanation of events. She had to have been high and hallucinating. The crazy stuff that came out of her mouth. It's too bad though if they hadn't been so doped up maybe one of them could have called an ambulance in time. Never the case though."



Dark Waters  
By Ashley M.

He looked down at the ripple of the black water catching his eye. Junior felt a shiver creep up his spine from the cold wind, as he hurriedly zipped up his letterman jacket. Standing here on this chilly night looking down at the water that roars beneath Thompson bridge. Junior couldn't help but reflect on how his life much like this water had turned into ripples of black memories. Memories of his mother which belonged in two categories before and after, before and after she had got sick with one of life's truest horror - cancer. Followed by Memory's of his father when mom was alive, and the shell of a human left after since mom had passed. Now a days most of Juniors life was very little about his life and a lot more on appeasing dad. "He already has a dead wife he doesn't need a disappointment of a son thought Junior". Juniors dark memories then turned his mood darker and he slowly grasped the bridge's cold metal rail slowly pulling both legs over the rail. He stared down at the roaring dark unforgiving water, nothing but his arms supporting him by holding on backwards on the rail and standing on a tiny slab of concrete separating, him from the water. Junior took a deep breathe ready for the pain of this life to be washed away. When all of a sudden he heard a soft voice almost whisper the phrase

"Oh please don't jump." Junior startled, said why shouldn't I? Who are you anyway, do I know you? " Perhaps."replied the voice, she then continued " You seem like a guy with a lot to lose, Please turn around." Junior hesitated but then decided maybe it's an angel mom had sent from the heavens to protect him Junior generally didn't think such nice thoughts but he liked to believe mom was still out there looking out for him. Junior very carefully slung both his long legs over the rail and was back on the safer side, not realizing a sense of relief washed over him almost like he wanted someone to save him. He turned his body away from the direction of the water and looked down and saw the most beautiful girl he had ever seen, with her curly ringlets of chocolate brown hair, and Deep blue eyes . He is sure he would remember someone of such beauty. "Hi I am Sophie"she uttered. Hi Sophie, I am junior. Sophie then jokingly and nervously said "Glad you didn't jump, or those cheerleaders might have missed a stud like you." she smiled and pointed at his letterman jacet. He looked up and smiled and then replied "Oh this? Yeah uhh I am actually not much of a jock, nor do I have time to be a ladies man? It's just a way to appease my dad since mom died. Sophie looked sad and said I am so sorry I know hard death can be. Junior looked at her as he noticed her smiling face was now frowning.He asked have you ever had someone close to you pass? Her blue eyes starting to form a tear in the corners yes I did someone I was really close with. She then hurriedly said I need to get home I am home schooled and my father will be upset if I am out too late but on a school night, overprotective father ya know, she smiled.

He was about to walk away and he turned around and said "Thank you if not for you I might have jumped." Anytime Sophie replied. Junior had a adventurous spirit wash over him as he pulled this stranger of a girl in and kissed her deeply, she kissed back passionately far to much passion for strangers. "He pulled back please tell me when I can see you again?" Junior anxiously asked. Well I should be able to sneak over to the bridge again tomorrow at 8? Sophie assured him. Excitedly Junior replied " That works perfect I have practice till 7:30. I'll stop by after. Okay I got to go now Sophie then hurried off behind the trees in the distance.

The next few weeks every night at 8 after Juniors football practice they would watch meteor showers, watch the ripples of the water ,cuddle beneath the stars make out passionately in his car never straying far away from the Thompson bridge water.

One night Sophie asked do you want to be with me forever?Junior replied " Yes, but how come we never get to go farther than Thompson bridge.

?" Sophie looked on guard and said I have explained to you before I have an overprotective.. Junior cut her off " Father" he said. Junior wanted to believe that but if that was the case why was she allowed out at night with a boy he never met? She said she never told them the whole truth about where she was going. Then with more gravel in her voice she asked do you want to be with me forever? Junior infuriated at her for not answering The question got out and ran to Thompson bridge where they had met on a not so distant night. Junior looked back into the dark Waters again watching each ripple ripple by ripple again wondering how he finally found happiness from a girl who was nothing but mystery? She knew everything about him yet he knew nothing of her life. Just then he heard the same soft voice he had heard that night. "Junior." Sophie said



desperation in her voice "Will you be with me forever?" Junior was still looking at the murky dark water only now reflecting the full moon light, which only added to the allure of the dark Waters. finally he replied back in disgust at the situation to Sophie "Forever's a long time.©

Then in just one moment, Junior's body was hurling down from Thompson bridge. He had felt a force behind him ,a push that was strong but not too strong,not like another guy. Then he realized it had to have been Sophie. Finally his body hit the water. Moments later Junior opened his eyes, in front of him was nothing but dark murky water surrounding him. The moon light helped to illuminate the way. Junior heard a boat in the distance, he rushed to the surface of the water. He screamed " HELP!" Feeling desperate Junior kept yelling help but this time closed his eyes waiting his impending death. Then all of a sudden he heard a boat behind him and a familiar soft voice that said " No use and trying to fight death you're already gone." Junior opened his eyes there before his eyes with a translucent glow to her was Sophie. She reached out her hand and Junior in desperation took it. The translucent body pulled Junior onto the boat. s he said " You're already gone just like me, Also just like me you were gonna jump over the bridge, but you didn't and I didn't know that I would fall in love with you. Now we will live together forever and ever and ever as you see Thompson bridge is a mecca for lost sous. He heard whispers all around him from other lost souls that took about residency under the bridge. Junior in realization that his dream girl was from the beyond, he said what about your father? She said " My father passed a long time ago I, I passed in the 60s after I died. he died of a heart attack. I've been so alone all these years but now I will have you forever and ever. Juney?" She asked .Junior with deperation in his eyes looked up into the sky he thought of dad and now how he had lost not only his wife but now his son will eternally be 17 years old, he also thought of himself and all the things he still wanted out of life.That is when Junior realized he will forever be a soul with unfinished business,stuck in the in-between with other lost souls. He then faintly whispered still staring at the sky "Forever."



Ariana M.

26 Years Old (Adult)

## The Town Of Beckens

October 27, Halloween season was creeping up on the little town. If you were just passing by you would never know it was there. It was tucked away hidden in the shadows. The residents liked it this way no one bothering them. Most of them wanted to be hidden and to never be found. All of them had a past like most of us. Nothing to sinister from any of them mainly just individuals wanting to have peace so we thought. No one in the town of Beckens was rude. They all respected each other's space. They would wave at there neighbors kindly. No one got involved with eachother bussiness. That was the good thing about Beckens there was never no drama or hate to anyone. Sounds like the picture perfect place right? We know about the people in Beckens what about the things under Beckens? Most of them didn't ask questions or go poking around. Why did the town become so lost? Something must have happened to make it this way. Halloween time comes every year and we all become at little on edge. Our senses our heightened everyone questions everything. Even the littlest things can't be trusted. One women named Sheri just moved to the town of Beckens. Sheri never believed anything to be perfect that is why she wanted to move to Becken's not for the peace for the mystery. How did she find out about the forgotten town? Sheri saw it in a dream so vivid she knew she had to find it. It had to be real she could see every detail like she was already there. She spent year after year searching until she found the town of Beckens. The neighbors never really gave much thought into Sheri or what she was doing. Maybe they should have paid closer attention to her and what she was doing night after night. Sheri came prepared for this town her computer, her ouija board, her candles, her countless books of un covering dark and forbiden secerts. Everything one may need to under cover a dark past. Since, Sheri didn't talk to her neighbors they were of no help to her. The best thing to do was to lay low in her house. The research was what she thought it would be. A whole lot of nothing she couldn't even find the town of Beckens online. Sheri knew then this place was even more hidden then she thought. Sheri wasn't going to give up. She talked to her Ouija board honestly it was the only way to talk to someone there. The board didn't say much just the number 13 over and over again. The candles would blow out and that would be it. Sheri then searched and searched she found online a page no title no nothing just page 13. She knew she had to click on it and see what was on it. It was blank



she scrolled and scrolled until she found something on the page. It said Beckens; The truth no one else would dare to say. That page was talking about how this women moved to Beckens after seeing it in a dream. Sheri felt like she was finnally getting some where. She kept trying to see if there was anymore she could find. That was it nothing more from the perspn no name if they were still there or anything. Sheri didn't know how to find them or if they were still there. Sheri knew with out any information there was no way to find them online. Finding them in this town wouldn't be easy either. Sheri was determined to find them no matter what it took. October 28, It was late at night everyone seemed to have there lights off in the town of Beckens. Sheri was up pacing trying to think of her next move. She remebered she had candles lit in the window. She didn't want any attetion so she blew them out. Just as Sheri blew out her candles she seen someone else in the house across the street. It looked like there lights were off yet she saw a flicker. Not a candle burning just a flicker of light it went off and on about 13 times. Sheri didn't know what to think of it at first. Then Sheri knew it had to be a sign. She flickered her lights off and on 13 times. Then all of sudden Sheri heard nothing not the fire crackling behind her. Nothing she could not hear one single sound. It was slient so slient you couldn't even hear your own breath. Then Sheri heard her door bell ring. She rushed right to it and opened the door. There was another person a very tall pretty women maybe mid 30's just like Sheri. The women rushed into Sheri's house and said shhhh hurry close the door no one can know I am here. Sheri said the neighbors aren't going to notice and care about what we are doing. The women said my name is Beth and the above grounders might not. However, I know the under grounders will. Sheri looked very confused she had never heard these terms before. Under grounders? What are you talking about no one even knows about this place accept us and our very few neighbors. Beth looked at Sheri and said you really do not know much about where you are do you? Sheri said I do not think anyone knows much about this place. Beth stated after living here 10 years and trying to write my story I have a pretty good idea. 10 years beth? That is a long time to live some where no body knows about. Beth looked at her and said yes I came here when I was about 20. I was having family issues and I had this crazy vivid dream about this place. It seemed so nice and the houses here go for pracitaly no money. I honestly do not remeber how I got here. I just one day moved here. It seemed so quiet so peaceful. I needed a refresh of my life. The first year I lived here it was nice. Nothing seemed to be a problem until I started seeing things late at night. I thought it was just my mind playing tricks on me after not socailzing for so long. Until every night at 3:13 I would hear people talking telling me to leave. I am not welcomed here and if I don't something bad will happen to me and no one will ever know. Beth said that's why I started writing my story online. Sheri asked why did you stop? There was no way you were done there was barely anything on the page. Beth said after that my computer just stopped working. I went to buy another one and before I left my car stopped working. I was going to use my phone to get a ride of out here because, things were becoming so overwhelming for me. My phone screen just shattered for no reason. It was in



my hands and as soon I as looked the phone was so broken it started leaking black fluid. Beth said this isn't the type of place where you ring your neighbors door bell and ask if you can use something. Plus they probaly wouldn't answer. They don't get involved with anything. Beth said when I saw you move in I had a strong feeling you were diffrent. Beth said Sheri I need to show you something while we both are still alive. Sheri's stomach sank to the ground realizing she would probaly never be able to publish her story or make it out of the town of Beckens. Sheri sighed deeply okay Beth what is it. Grab your coat Sheri and put on your shoes. Beth took Sheri about a mile into these deep deep woods. The trees were so big and it was so dark Sheri and Beth hand to hold hands just so they wouldn't loose each other. Sheri then seen almost a neon glow it was a black neon glow so black it seemed to be glowing. Sheri seen some one come out of it. Then another person. They ran so fast Sheri couldn't see who they were. She said they looked human like but not fully. Beth what is this place and why are we here? Why did you bring me here? Why are you doing this to me? Please do not hurt me. Beth looked super offened Sheri I am not the one here to trying to hurt you. I am trying to help both of us. You know those people like creatures we just spotted. They come from the ground late at night they live in the ground. This was once a burial ground very long ago Sheri. Sheri stared at Beth a lot of houses are built on burial grounds. None of them are like this. Beth looked at Sheri and started tearing up. Sheri we are never getting out of here. No matter how hard we try or want to. This town is a town of death Sheri. Sheri looked confused everyone is so boaring here they could be dead but they aren't. Beth looked at Sheri look this is the truth of the town of Beckens. Beckens is built for people who never want to be found. Beth whispered the people under ground take over your body late at night. That's why no one talks. They do not want anyone to know they are not alive. They take over your soul Sheri. The half humans we saw are looking for souls. They possess you early in your dreamss. The undergrounders take over your mind long before you even enter Beckens. How are you alive Beth? Sheri I honestly have no idea. I thought maybe for a while I thought I was dead. I started exploring. I know I am not dead because, Sheri I am so beyond scared. The black neon glow came back. Sheri and Beth fell to the ground they fell flat on there faces so hard it made there faces gush blood. Sheri reached for Beth's hand do not let go. It was now midnight officially October 29th. The ground beneath them was bloody and the neon glow was back. The undergrounders came out two young ladies. They started to slip in the bodies of the "above grounders". Sheri and Beths eyes turned bright orange even more orange then the blood mood above them. They winked and smiled at each other are you ready to take on our news lives? They walked out of the deep woods laughing so loudly they say you can still hear them. Haha idoits they thought this town was for above grounders. Little did they knew we had been planning for them to meet. They thought they could outwit us we have been living in there minds for years. The town of Beckens now had there two most powerful "undergrounders" above ground.



Riley S.

Age: 25

What is the creepiest thing you can think of? Does your nightmares keep you up until the safe morning? Does the void of paranoia keep the gut wrenching anticipation to the deep dark corners of the room?

The mind's infinite imagination can summon lurking shadows behind the shoulder, a monster's presence creeping in the closet, or the millions of bugs that are sneaking in the bed to lay eggs in your ears waiting to hatch any moment. A wild imagination can conjure up the most diabolical monsters without even being real! Is that the truth or is that absurd imagination the fear of what actually exists in the dark corners of life? I ask because this is not a story, but a warning for all minds to control the fearful nightmares that may escape to reality. Do not think of the pale clown with discolored makeup and looming smile that stares at you while you sleep in the dark. Do not think of the red eyed monster that awaits to grab your feet once you get out of bed, even just for a moment. Do not think of the millions of hairy spiders crawling all over your vulnerable body to lay millions of tiny spiders in your ears..... Eeeeeek ! I felt something touch my foot!! I told you its nothing just your imagination. Do not think of the monster that roams your mind that will come out once alone at night, with the curdling tapping in the growing darkness that maybe the footsteps getting oh so close!! I told you stop thinking but the mind shall never stop imagining the scary clown, monster, ghosts, ghouls, gross bugs or the shadows always to follow the vulnerable paranoia which is the human mind!!! All those fears bottling up may cause an opening to escape the mind if not contained..Then again who can really control a fearful imagination about what is awaiting in the not so empty night. So i say have a cautious night and i leave you to your nightmares that may be closer than you believe. Don't let the bugs Bite.... Mwahahahahaha!



# Unlucky Day

By: Elizabeth E

Grade: Adult

Phone number: 708-271-5500

It started one sunny fall day just after school had started. I was sitting in class with my 19 other classmates working on a history worksheet when all of a sudden, the ancient loudspeaker crackled to life and very quietly almost a whisper I made out the principal saying we are in lockdown- before the ancient loudspeaker went quiet. We all looked at each other briefly before our teacher tried ushering us to the opposite corner of the room but it was too late. The shooter was standing right behind my teacher and when she turned around, the gunman shot her in the head and asked the 20 students (including me Dustin Davis) who's next? Then he asked me to step forward (I guess I should mention I am the sheriff's son) and proceeded to spray the room with bullets and laugh like an evil clown. What seemed like forever (not sure because I was unconscious) police and SWAT burst into our classroom and subdued the active shooter and took him away. Police then began to help the injured and get us all out of the room. Once outside, all of the injured got medical attention and taken to the hospital by ambulance and from there were treated according to how severe our injuries were (doctors say my injuries were the worst they have ever seen and it's a miracle I survived). I woke up a few days later to see my mom and 7 siblings crying fearing I was dead or dying but by some miracle I had survived the school shooting (I also found out my teacher was the only one in my class to pass away). It was a long month in the hospital recovering from my injuries but I gotta go home (even though I was in a wheelchair for a while). But that wasn't the worst



part, the worst part was suffering from hallucinations and fear and night terrors. It broke my mama's heart, so she took me to a psychologist to try and figure out what was wrong with her precious son. After an hour or two, the psychologist gave her diagnosis that I have PTSD and my mama asked questions like if I was going to need a PTSD dog or not and a bunch of others. The psychologist told my mama that a PTSD dog is really beneficial for me and told her about a program the clinic goes through to help people get service dogs and wrote a referral for me. So we went to the place the psychologist referred me to and it was awesome, there were all sorts of dogs in these small but roomy pens. The first day was picking out the right dog for me, after trying all of the dogs a friendly rottie got my attention and it was an instant match. The following days and weeks, we spent learning and training on how to work together and a bunch of other important things. Graduation day came and went, and we flew to Florida to be with my mama and 7 siblings and start a new life together.

*The End*



# "One Too Many"

by

Lara T.

~~719 555 555~~  
~~555 555 555~~  
~~555 555 555~~

I wrote this story  
a long time ago (when I  
was in high school - thought  
about doing it but decided to  
leave it as it was... story  
two can be different ☺)  
ignore (or enjoy) the  
teacher's comments - I didn't  
have the heart to erase them ☺

Creative Writing

Period 5

March 12, 1998



Danny stood on the edge of the rocky cliff. Looking down through glazed eyes, he watched the white waves gently lap the jagged rocks below. Leaning over to get a closer look, he felt memories tug at him, taunt him, as the waves devoured the jagged peaks, glistening in the moonlight. What was he trying to remember? The water, the warm water, that's what he remembered-- how warm the water was. Shivering in the cold night air, he longed to be warm, without a moments hesitation, he jumped over the edge, onto the rocks, the cold water leaping and covering his twisted, bloody corpse.

\* \* \* \* \*

We are now landing in Savannah, Georgia. The temperature is 78 degrees, with relatively high humidity. Thank you for flying Delta, have a nice day. Audrey Shelton stepped off the plane into a small bustling airport no bigger than two football fields. The usual buzz of the airport was louder, more directed. It was not the gentle hum of relatives and friends greeting one another but it sounded as if the whole town was engaged in a rumor, a big story of some sort that everyone was dying to know about. Everyone eyed her as she passed, but all of it was an unfamiliar blur. She made her way over to the baggage claim. As she waited for her bags, she picked up a snatch of conversation from two women, the younger listening in awe as the elder narrated the story. Something about a young man, possibly named Danny, who had fallen off a cliff overlooking Lake Sherry, the night before last. Her dark, worn luggage came around the bend in the conveyer belt, she snatched it up and headed for the exit. Stepping out onto the crowded street, a wave of warm, moist air, encircled her and filled her, she began to perspire from just standing there. Looking around it was as if she had stepped back into a favorite story, with the old cobblestone streets, and huge trees draped with Spanish Moss. She smiled, happy she had chosen such a bright and beautiful place to attend college. It was so much different from the plains that were

Great Sentence.



Kansas. She quickly hailed a cab and headed for Walton Boulevard, where she was to attend Walton U. She was nervous about meeting her new roommates, afraid of not fitting in, but the sights around her only lifted her spirits, and she hoped that the people were as nice as their surroundings.

The cab pulled up to an archaic building, larger than the surrounding buildings, but much more lovely. Its tall columns and climbing vines painted a picture of decades past. She paid the cab driver, and thanked him as he lifted her bags from the trunk.

"Good Luck, miss," the cab driver said in a southern drawl and an animated grin covering his face.

"Thanks," Audrey breathed, her shyness overwhelming her, the shyness that had not paralyzed her since her sophomore year of high school, was now creeping slowly back into her.

Turning her attention back to the looming edifice, she made her way to the newer looking building which housed the dorms. She had dragged her parents down here last summer and explored the campus til she knew every inch, nook, and cranny, it was like coming home to an old, dearly loved friend. The only thing that made her nervous were the nagging questions of who are my roommates? What are they like? She knew their names, Bobbie Tucker and Mercedes Ford, but that was all she knew. She reached her dorm room, 375, the door looked brand new, and the shiny brass knob shone in the bright fluorescent lights of the long corridor. She reached for the knob, but before she reached it, the door flew open. Stifling a startled scream, Audrey stood face to face with a blonde girl, older than she.

"Hi, my name is Bobbie, welcome to Savannah!" she said with a huge smile and a drawl that sounded as if she had been in Savannah her whole life.

Sitting on the bed behind her was another blonde, who didn't draw as much attention, as the enthusiastic Bobbie Tucker, but was happy just the same.

"I'm Mercedes Ford, please hold the sarcasm," she said through braces that caught and reflected the sunlight playing through a large picture window.

"Hi, I'm Audrey Shelton, freshman from Kansas, nervous and happy to be here!" Audrey said smiling. Glad she had not been met with hostility or quiet nods upon entering. The girls' enthusiasm for life made Audrey relax.

"That's your bed over there," Bobbie commented pointing to the single wood bed in the corner of the room. "Mercedes has the top bunk, and I took the lower one," she added naming what was whose, "We each get one of the drawers in the dresser, we'll share the closet." she finished, her smile on constant display. Audrey nodded showing she understood and moved to drop her things on the flowered spread covering her bed. Sitting down she smiled as her roommates looked at her.

"So have you heard yet?" Mercedes asked on the brink of exploding with a secret.

"Heard what?" Audrey asked bewildered.

"About Danny Olan," Bobbie answered impatiently, "the one who died two nights ago. He lived in the next dorm building over." Bobbie finished in one breath.

"No, I haven't," Audrey asked stunned, "what happened?"

"Well," Mercedes began, "The other night, we had all been hanging out, at Andy's Fry and Grill, when Danny got this weird look in his eyes and said he had to go unpack, and get some things done."



"He just up and left," mused Bobbie, "and we never heard from him again. This morning the TV and newspapers are full of news about his body being found at Lake Sherry.

All three sat in stunned silence, letting the air conditioner fill the void.

"Hey, I know," Bobbie said with a little bit of cheer, "let's go to Louie's party tonight!"

"Who is Louie?" Audrey asked.

Bobbie and Mercedes cast a look at each other, "freshmen"-- the two sophomores were going to have to show her the ropes, especially if she had to ask, who Louie was.

"Only the loudest, cutest, most popular, party animal on campus," Mercedes said smiling.

It was settled; the girls were going to attend Louie's usual welcome back to school bash.

\* \* \* \* \*

The party was loud, Bobbie and Audrey watched as Mercedes led them through the crowd, then disappeared.

"I'll introduce you to a couple of people," Bobbie said.

"Okay," Audrey said in a barely audible whisper.

"Are you all right?"

"Yeah. I'm fine."

"Look over there, that's Billy, lets go talk to him, he's sweet."

"Billy," Bobbie began, "this is Audrey, she's new here, mind showing her around while I go find Josh?"

"Hi," Billy said with a slight hint of an accent, southern, but not a Savannah one.

"Hey, I'm Audrey Shelton, and I'm scared out of my wits." she managed with a smile.

"Don't be afraid, I'll watch out for you." he said smiling.

As they made their way around the party, Billy introduced her around to the people he knew.

They finally stopped at a small circle of people.

"This is Louie," Billy said, "Barbara, Amy, Nicole, and Sam."

Everyone smiled, Nicole looked wearily at her but quickly turned her attention to a tall, blonde boy, the one named Sam. Amy didn't respond at all, just looked as if she wanted to run. The vacant stare in her eyes scared Audrey but she didn't know what to do or say.

"Hey, Billy, do you want to go get a drink?" Audrey asked.

"Yeah, let's go."

She took one last look at Amy before they left, the girl's vacant stare still haunting her pretty face.

\* \* \* \* \*

Amy vaguely remembered the girl who had been introduced as Audrey. Poor girl, happy to be here. She looked around the room. It was too loud, too stuffy. Someone bumped into her, nearly knocking her over without apologizing. She couldn't breathe anymore. She pushed her way through the swarms of people moving with the thumping, booming rhythm of the deafening music. She could hear Louie calling after her, but she didn't turn around. As she reached the massive doors she reached out and yanked one open, and rushed out into the cool night air. Breathing deeply, she made her way to the lush gardens. The heat wrapped itself around her, putting a pleasant pressure on her lungs. Strolling down the garden path, she let all her muscles relax.



She saw huge flowers still blossoming, and the huge trees that stretched lazily towards the star filled sky. She smiled, a slow warm smile. Out of the corner of her eye she noticed a huge magnolia tree. One that stood out from the rest.

*Climb me. Climb me.*

Startled, she looked around the green garden for the source of the voice, seeing no one she shrugged it off.

*Climb me. Climb me.*

She looked at the tree bewildered, and the urge to climb it overwhelmed her. Giving in she climbed to the top. She looked out over the immense expanse of land, Louie Charmille's father's mansion. She wished to be rich like Louie, or Bobbie Tucker. She felt like an outsider in her own hometown. She squeezed her eyes shut. Starlight, star bright, keep me safe tonight.

Keep me safe tonight?

Having no idea what she meant, she began to feel uneasy. Time to get out of the tree. She looked down to find the safest route, but something else caught her eye. A rosebush, on the opposite side that she had climbed up. The roses where all at their zenith, fully in bloom. How odd, the rosebush seemed to tease her memory. As suddenly as the memory filled her mind she reached for the roses--reached and tumbled down-- arms open to embrace the sweet-smelling roses. The rose bush.

\* \* \* \* \*

Audrey had good dreams that night, about her future here in Savannah. She already adored the place and the few people she had met. She was roused from her dreams by a loud whining noise. Sirens! No, not sirens! Curling up into a tight little ball, she plugged her ears, and

squeezed her eyes shut. Her bodily shook violently, as she repeated, NO! NO! NO! NO SIRENS! she didn't realize she was screaming until Bobbie yelled at her to stop, anger and fear mixed in the blonde's eyes.

"What's wrong?" Bobbie asked, her voice trembling.

"What's wrong, why are their sirens? where's my daddy? ouch it hurts, it hurts." Audrey spewed forth the words.

Scared to death, Bobbie told her it was all right, she stroked the scared girl's hair, and cooed to her softly, "Don't worry, honey, its okay." "It's okay, don't be frightened."

If it hadn't been for the soft drawl, Audrey would have thought it was her mother, but glad that it wasn't she snapped back into reality as quickly as she had left.

"What happened?" Audrey asked.

"There were sirens and then you started screaming like someone was hurting you, and you said you were hurt, and afraid for your daddy." Bobbie gushed forth obviously upset.

"Why were there sirens?" Audrey asked offering no information as to why she had reacted the way she had.

"Amy Smitt, do you know her? Pretty brunette, hangs with Louie's crew?"

"Um. Yes, she looked scared last night, a vacant look in her eyes. Is she all right?"

"No, Aud, she's dead."

"What, how, why?"

"All I know is she broke her neck falling out of a tree. I saw her body this morning when I was helping Louie clean up. It was so awful Aud."

Audrey turned pale, "Oh my," was all she could get past her lips.



"Maybe you should skip your classes today." Bobbie offered.

"No, I have to go, it won't do me any good to stay here, I didn't even know the girl."

"Yeah, but you reacted to those sirens."

"I'll be fine." Aud said in an icy tone she immediately regretted, "Bobbie, I am so sorry, you were only trying to help, forgive me?"

"Of course. It's all right, you're just shook up. You take the shower first. My classes are later in the day."

"Thanks," Audrey breathed, glad she had not upset her new friend.

Today she had psychology first, math, and then a literature class. In psychology her teacher talked endlessly about what they were going to be studying; personality, behaviors, adolescence, etc. etc. In the corner of the room sat a man, early thirties, dark hair and eyes, and tall. Towards the end of the class, the teacher, Mr. Nadas, introduced the man as Dr. Michael Bancroft, who had come to Walton to do a study. He had started the study two weeks before, but he still needed an assistant to do a few things for him.

"I'll take the names of anyone who is interested today, and get back to you tomorrow."

Michael Bancroft said, as he flashed a big pearly white smile.

"Class dismissed." Nadas called.

Attracted to Michael, Audrey signed up immediately. There were only three other names on the list, all girls, all freshman, probably wooed by his charm, just as Audrey was.

\* \* \* \* \*

Michael Bancroft reviewed the list. Two girls he ruled out because they were Savannah locals, one lived off campus, so it was narrowed down to one person, Audrey Shelton. It was her second day in Savannah, and she lived in the newest dorm building. Perfect.

\* \* \* \* \*

Audrey arrived back at the dorm after her last class. Mercedes was there too.

"Hey, what's up?" Mercedes said.

"Nothing, want to go grab something to eat?" Audrey said, "my treat."

"Okay."

"Where should we go?"

"Let's go to Andy's diner, it's right off campus and we all hang out there all the time."

"Sounds good."

After lunch they returned to the dorm. Bobbie was about ready to leave for her afternoon.

"Hey, Mercedes, your mom called." Bobbie called as she left the room.

Mercedes called her mom back. As they talked, Audrey thought about Michael, and then about Billy. Which led her mind back to Amy and then Danny, what had happened to those two? Was it all just a big coincidence they died so close together. Mercedes hung up the phone.

"Hey, this weekend, do you want to come with me to my parent's, they're having a barbeque. We'll invite Bobbie too."

"Sounds cool!" Audrey said with a warm smile.

At that moment Bobbie walked in the door.

"Hey, guys, what's up?" Bobbie asked.

"Want to go with us to my parents barbeque this weekend?" Mercedes asked.



"Yeah, I adore your parents." Bobbie said. "You guys will never believe the guy I met today. His name is Alan, and he is so totally adorable."

"Someone looks happy." Audrey said laughing.

"I sure am, and we're going to dinner tonight!" Bobbie beamed.

Bobbie went to go get ready to meet Alan, and Mercedes and Audrey began to tell each other about their pasts, where they came from, and all the secrets friends share.

\* \* \* \* \*

Audrey woke up and wiped the sleep from her eyes. This morning had started out more peaceful than yesterday. She had not meant to slip back all those years, to when she was six.

When she was in the car and her father had died in the accident. She shook the thoughts from her head. Grabbed a can of diet coke, dressed quickly and headed for psychology class. →

She had forgotten all about Michael, but when she walked in and he called out her name, she stopped, overwhelmed for a moment, than walked over to where he was standing, flashing the most charming smile she could conjure.

boy, you  
sure have  
captured  
the  
typical  
college  
morning!  
Oh... I  
miss it!  
✓

"Hello, Audrey Shelton?, I'm Michael Bancroft, I've chosen you to be my assistant, can you come to my office about 4:15?" he said in a rush.

"S-s-sure," Audrey stuttered, "tell me when and where and I'll be there." she said with more confidence than she felt.

"4:15, room 234, it's my makeshift office." he said.

"Okay, see you then." Audrey said as he made his exit.

It took forever to get through her classes that day, she kept slipping off into daydreams, thinking about Michael. When the time finally came for her to go see him, she was so nervous she

thought she was going to pass out. She stopped in front of the door labeled 234, took three deep breaths and went in. She didn't see him anywhere. The room was tiny, compared to the classrooms. A curtain made a makeshift wall on the left side of the room. It was pulled back to reveal a cluttered desk, what looked like the typical psychiatrist couch, and two worn but inviting recliners. There was a long oval table (it was piled high with papers too). On the side of the room that could not be hidden with the curtain was a wall lined with file cabinets. There was an old desk and three plastic metal chairs, one behind the desk and two off to the side, like in a waiting room. At that moment Michael burst into the room carrying a bag of Chinese takeout.

"Hungry?" he asked as if they did this everyday.

"Yeah," Audrey said feeling out of place.

"Well don't look so worried," he said laughing, "It's time for dinner, we all have to eat, I won't poison you--promise."

Blushing deeper than before, Audrey slowly sat in one of the hard metal chairs.

"No, no silly, sit over here, it's more comfortable." he said motioning to the two recliners. Before she even sat down he began to explain to her what she was to do. "All I ask is that you help people check in, there are about thirty of them, no, it's twenty-eight now," he said, almost to himself, "Anyway, check them in, file their files, help me keep this place clean, and since you're in psychology you can watch me at work."

"That's all you want me to do?" Audrey asked.

"For now, yes, just an hour or two everyday, twenty dollars a week, plus lunch now and again," he answered, "sound good?"



"Yes, it sounds great," she said finally relaxing. For rest of the afternoon they chatted and munched on Moo Goo Gai Pan.

\* \* \* \* \*

The weekend came quickly, Mercedes dragged Audrey and Bobbie to her parents' for the promised BBQ. The Ford's were lovely people who made delicious meals. Saturday afternoon Bobbie and Audrey returned to the dorm, while Mercedes stayed with her parents. On the way home, Audrey talked about Michael and Bobbie talked about Alan.

"He isn't exactly neat," Bobbie began, "his hair is all messed up and he has this weird lopsided grin that is so adorable." "He is tall, brown eyes and hair. Probably early thirties."

"Sounds like Michael, only he's immaculate, in his appearance he is anyway." Audrey said a smile playing at the corners of her mouth.

\* \* \* \* \*

Mercedes tried to sleep. She didn't feel tired. Maybe the cool night air would help. She left her bed. Once outside she climbed onto the trampoline. At first she bounced softly, then higher and higher. She watched the stars, the bright stars. She looked around her small yard. Near the trampoline was an old rusty rake, laying with its prongs pointed up. How odd, why was it so close to the trampoline? A sudden fear wrapped its icy claw around her. The trampoline became a yawning mouth ready to swallow her. She tried to escape. Leaping off the trampoline, she tumbled in the air. Landing hard on the rake. Its rusty tongs stabbing through her forehead. It took a few minutes for her to die, the blood oozing out over the rake. The only thought that ran through her mind, was, why did I have to remember?

\* \* \* \* \*

The next morning the shrill ringing of the phone startled Audrey out of sleep. On the other end was Mercedes mother sobbing loudly.

"Audrey, Mercedes is dead."

"What happened?" Audrey asked.

"Last night I heard her on the trampoline. When I didn't hear her jumping, I thought she had gone to bed." She stopped to sob, "she fell on a rake, Aud, the teeth went through her forehead."

"Oh no." Audrey said and began to cry.

Bobbie woke up at that moment, "Aud, what's the matter?" the fear of the other morning running through her head. Tears running down her face, she managed to get out the words, "Mercedes is dead." Together the girls shed silent tears in the memory of their friend.

"What's going on around here?" Bobbie asked.

"What do you mean?" Audrey asked?

"All these deaths, why is everyone dying? I am so scared." Bobbie said.

"I am too." Audrey said sobbing. "We have to do something, Bobbie, before we're the ones dying."

"Okay. Let's go to the cops. I just need to get myself together first."

\* \* \* \* \*

Audrey and Bobbie walked into the local police department. A short stout police officer motioned them forward with one pudgy hand.

"What can I do for you?" the officer asked.



Eyeing the nameplate that read Anderson, Audrey answered, "We were wondering what you we're doing about all these deaths happening on campus."

"What are you talking about, miss?" Anderson asked.

"Danny Olan, Amy Smitt, Mercedes Ford." Bobbie said. "Those people didn't just fall and die, it's too big a coincidence."

Audrey looked at her friend worried. Bobbie looked as if she were on the verge of a nervous breakdown.

"Are you okay?" Audrey asked Bobbie.

"Yeah. I'll be okay." Bobbie answered.

"Ma'am, at the moment they are all considered suicides. Even though there are no suicide notes, there isn't any evidence pointing to the possibility of murder." Anderson said.

"Now go home and get some rest."

Audrey and Bobbie left the station. They were upset that the officer had not taken them seriously.

Bobbie asked Audrey, "What do we do now?"

"Go home, make some hot tea, and get some rest. Let's just try and forget about this whole mess. At least for one night." she answered.

\* \* \* \* \*

"Hello, Audrey." Michael called as he walked into the room. "How are you today?"

"Not so great." Audrey replied.

"Why? What's wrong?" he asked.

"I rather not talk about it. Is there anything you would like me to do?"

"Just straighten out my files. There are about twenty-seven to alphabetize."

The two hours passed quickly. Audrey filed all the files and straightened out the papers Michael had scattered across his desk. The only name she recognized among the files was Josh Dawson. He was one of Bobbie's close friends. Looking for Michael she picked up her stuff. Seeing him nowhere in sight, she headed home.

\* \* \* \* \*

Bobbie sat in the small diner of Fish and Chips. It lay on the outskirts of town. She sat across from Alan.

"I'm sorry about your friend." Alan said.

"What? Oh, Mercedes. Can we not talk about that, I'll only end up crying." Bobbie said wearily.

"Sure, sure. I'm sorry I brought it up. So how are your classes going?"

"Boring, I can't seem to concentrate. My mind keeps wondering back to Amy, Danny, and Mercedes."

"Why do you keep thinking about them?"

"Because I don't believe they were accidents. I can't imagine what could have happened. I knew those people. I know they wouldn't have killed themselves."

"Why?" Alan asked.

"They just wouldn't. I know they wouldn't." Bobbie answered. She glanced at her watch. "We have to go. It's getting late."

"Okay." Alan said. He paid the bill and they left. The ride home was filled with friendly chatter. The chords of an unfamiliar song playing in the background.



\* \* \* \* \*

After Alan dropped Bobbie off, he drove home. No, not home, to a motel room. His head began to throb. The last thing he remembered was turning into the motel parking lot.

\* \* \* \* \*

Michael woke up, and pulled on his clothes. His head hurt. He wanted to go back to bed but he had already slept far too long. He told his reflection, "I have to get to work." Audrey was probably already there. Such a lovely girl. Two or three people would be coming in. He ran out the door of the motel on his way to the campus.

\* \* \* \* \*

Audrey didn't want to interrupt Dr. Bancroft to ask for another duty; instead she found herself pacing the room. Michael had been hypnotizing the woman for a long time today. She sat down at the desk and began to fiddle with the drawers. The first held desk supplies. The second and third drawer were empty, and the fourth one was jammed.

\* \* \* \* \*

"I'm going to visit Josh." Bobbie called.

"Hey, I saw him today, he came in for Michael's study." Audrey said.

"Really?" Bobbie asked.

"Yeah, didn't he tell you?" Audrey asked.

"Nope, he didn't, I remember Mercedes mentioning it but she was the only one." Bobbie said. "Well, see you later."

\* \* \* \* \*

Josh had decided to change his name to "Razor". About a week ago when he had bought his new motorcycle. Just as quick as he had gotten the bike he had wrecked it. It sat in a shop awaiting repairs. He sat on the roof of the fraternity house, watching for Bobbie. He could see her car coming. He edged closer to the edge of the roof. She came closer. He stood up. He saw the sun reflecting off the iron fence. The glint caught and held his attention. Bobbie was calling his name. He moved towards her, falling off the roof. He tumbled in the air and came down hard on the fence. His eye catching on the iron spike. He died instantly. Bobbie began to scream and scream. She woke up in the hospital. The bleeping of machines surrounded her. She saw her parents and Audrey. She loved Audrey for being there. She slipped back to her unconscious state.

\* \* \* \* \*

Just home from the hospital, Bobbie was tired. She found several messages from Alan, but she wasn't ready to face him. Wasn't ready to face anyone. When he called her, she exploded.

"Alan, I don't want to see you anymore." Bobbie said into the phone.

"What?" Alan yelled. "You can't dump me!"

"Yes I can, and I am." "Too many people are dying around me and I can't put anything into a relationship right now." She looked up at Audrey, afraid she might disappear.

"You'll regret this Bobbie." Alan yelled.

"Maybe, but I can't deal right now." She hung up the phone before he could reply. On the other end Alan slammed down the motel phone. He said to no one, "They'll die. They all will."



\* \* \* \* \*

As Alan drove to work he plotted revenge for Bobbie. No one hurt him. No one. His parents had tried. He had won though. He would win again.

\* \* \* \* \*

Audrey sat at the wooden desk. She had just finished her studying for today. Another half hour and she could leave. Michael sat behind the curtain with another volunteer for his study. Remembering Josh had volunteered, she searched for his file. It was gone. She looked in rest of the cabinets but could not find it. She looked in the desk drawers. It wasn't in there, either. Her eyes settled on the last drawer, the one that was jammed. She pulled on it, but nothing happened. She pulled again. It didn't budge. She yanked with all her might. The drawer came loose, and she was knocked on the floor. On top of the pile of things in the drawer, was Josh Dawson's file. Along with it was Mercedes Ford's, Amy Smitt's, and Danny Olan's files. She stared in shock at what she had found.

"Audrey?" Michael called.

"Yes?" she said standing up.

"What were you doing on the floor?"

"Um, just seeing why this drawer wouldn't budge." She slid the drawer shut with her foot.

"Don't worry about it." he said. "Just file this, and we'll be gone." "Do you want a ride?" Michael asked.

"No. I live just across campus. Remember?" Audrey said smiling.

"Oh, yeah." Michael said blushing deeply.

"You can walk me home, though."

"Let me throw my stuff in the car and I'll do just that."

As they walked towards her dorm he took her hand. She felt her heart thumping loudly. When they reached her door, he kissed her goodnight. She was so happy she felt she could float. When she walked through the door, Bobbie's icy glare stopped her dead in her tracks.

"What's wrong?" Audrey asked.

"How dare you." Bobbie breathed, "We've only been broken up for a week and you're already seeing him?"

"Seeing who? Michael?"

"No, Alan. I saw you walking together. I saw you kiss him."

"Were you spying on me and Michael?"

"That was Alan."

"No, it wasn't."

"Call Alan and find out, ask him if he was kissing me." Audrey told Bobbie.

"Why don't you? That's his number on your hand."

Audrey looked down at her hand where Michael had written his number. She called him.

"Hello." A deep voice answered.

"H-h-hello, Michael?" Audrey asked.

"This isn't Michael."

"Alan?"

"Who wants to know. Who is this?" he shouted in her ear.



Audrey slammed down the phone. Frightened, she looked at Bobbie. The files she found earlier suddenly popped into her head. She told Bobbie about the files as she dragged her across the quad. Flashlights in hands, they broke into the small office. Everything was gone. No papers, no furniture, even the makeshift curtain was gone. Horrified, they went to the police for a third time and told them everything they knew.

\* \* \* \* \*

Alan packed everything up. He had to hurry before Michael returned. The office was already cleaned out, but he needed to get out of the motel. He knew Audrey had seen those files. Alan stood staring out the window at the patrol car that had just pulled up. A rotund officer and the girls got out. What were they doing here? Were they here for him?

\* \* \* \* \*

Anderson asked to see the motel's register for the last month. Together they poured over the names. They didn't find an Alan or a Michael Bancroft. The only name that sounded reasonable was Michael Gustoff.

"Gustoff, that's Alan's last name." Bobbie said.

"Know who this is?" Anderson asked the owner.

"Yes, nice man. Staying in 274. Always coming and going. Never sleeps. Sometimes he looks real immaculate, and other times he's a slob." the owner answered.

Anderson pounded on the door of 274 but no one answered. He told the girls, "Nothing we can do tonight, just stay away from them, or him, whoever, just keep away. Okay?"

"Okay." the girls answered.

\* \* \* \* \*

Michael watched the police car pull away. He hoped nothing bad had happened. He looked at his packed things. He couldn't remember doing all that but he was exhausted. He laid down and drifted off to sleep without much thought as to why he had packed his belongings.

\* \* \* \* \*

Alan called Bobbie.

"Hello." Audrey asked answering the phone.

"Is Bobbie there?" Alan asked.

"Who is this?"

"Alan."

"Um. Just one minute, I'll have her call you back." Audrey said and hung up.

Bobbie looked to Audrey and asked who had called. She told her that it had been Alan, and that she had a plan. "We'll only do it if you really want to though."

\* \* \* \* \*

Bobbie sat next to Alan as they drove towards "Make Out Point" above Lake Sherry.

Bobbie shuddered, remembering it was the spot where Danny had been found.

"You all right, Bobbie?" Alan asked.

Bobbie couldn't decide who looked more nervous, Alan or her.

"Yeah, I'm fine, so what do you want to talk about?" she asked.

"Not yet. I'll tell you when we get there." Alan said.

He parked at the edge of the cliff.

"Come on, get out." he told Bobbie.



She stood near the edge and looked at all the lights of the city, and at the boats floating on the lake. Stepping up behind Bobbie, Alan wrapped his arms around her waist. She was so frightened she didn't think she was breathing. He whispered in her ear, "How'd you know?"

"Know what?" she asked puzzled.

"That I helped kill those people."

"You did!" Bobbie exclaimed, "um, how did you do it, everyone thinks the deaths are suicides."

Not feeling a wire attached to her body, he told her the story of his parents, the scientists, who had used him as a human lab rat. "All I was, was a science project." he said bitterly.

She looked at him. Hugging him in hope of buying time. "But that doesn't explain how you did it."

"What do you care?" he snapped.

"I care about you." Bobbie said. "If I knew what you did, I could help you."

Alan was convinced she was sincere so he told her of his false identity Michael. More of an alter ego, Michael was unaware of what was going on. "I used post hypnotic suggestion. Michael's study on hypnosis. At some point during the session I became the dominant personality. I suggested objects like rocks and rakes. I advised them to jump on them. I didn't even realize it would work. I guess I'm just like my parents. Damn. I thought I could be better than they were, that is why I tried to be Michael. I tried so hard." Alan said.

He began to cry. Bobbie wondered if he had forgotten she was there. She tried to lead him away from the ledge, but he only tightened his grip.

"Bobbie, you know too much." he said calmly. "Now you must die too. Perhaps like Danny."

"Audrey knows where I am." she shouted.

"Who cares. Maybe we'll both jump, a lover's leap-" he was cut off by the loud whine of sirens. He threw his body forward, and felt Bobbie slipping from his hands as she ducked. He was falling. As they watched from above, his lips parted into a crooked, evil smile. He slammed and crumpled upon the same rocks that had killed Danny.

\* \* \* \* \*

Anderson drove Bobbie and Audrey home and apologized for not acting sooner and putting them in harm's way. The girls forgave him.

"So Audrey, what are you doing for Thanksgiving break?" Bobbie asked.

"Well, I was thinking of visiting my aunt Gracie in Shreveport. Want to come?" Audrey asked.

"Will it be calm, or do you cause turmoil wherever you go?"

"Only one way to find out." Audrey answered smiling.

The End

Wow!  
I am very pleased with how this story turned out.  
Your use of suspense was wonderful!  
Excellent work!