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vol 3 #2

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**The literary magazine of the 7th and 8th grades
Somerville, Massachusetts
Summer 2018**

sps7·8 **vol 3 #2**

**The literary magazine of the 7th and 8th grades
Somerville, Massachusetts**

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A goal of this magazine is to publish four times in academic year 2018-19. Writers entering 7th and 8th grades in September are encouraged to submit your fiction, poetry, essays, critique, and other writing beginning now. Email your work to happeningmagazine@yahoo.com.

The Poetry Wall: A large selection of poetry from students in all grades appears on line at 12zine.com. Visit and read online and give input to assist in the selection of poems for poets to earn awards and move forward in publishing.

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Needle in my foot

Zack Weissman-Bennett

“—Fade away jumper... it's...

“—*owwww*!—

“—*Sh*t!* what the hell was that?— I screamed.

Ari came over. “Stop playing, Zack. It's only a little cut.”

The part that was true was that it was a little cut; the part that was not true was that I was faking. It was bleeding a bit but it was about a centimeter long and deep. I tried to take a step but pain shot up through my foot. Now you're probably thinking what a wimp but I tell you now you're very wrong if you think that. We searched for anything sharp on the rug but could not find anything. “Mom could you get me a Band-Aid?”

“Okay,” she said. “Also, we need to be at the Hanukkah party in a bit.”

“How are we getting there?” I asked.

“By bike.”

“No, mom, it really hurts,” I complained.

“It's not that bad,” she said and what moms say always happens so we did bike. I tell you it hurt like hell the whole way as if my foot was being crushed, broken. Well, we did make it there; after that I just collapsed on the couch to wait for the pain to subside a little. It was not a bad party. The food was good, the dessert was good. A friend showed up, it was a good time but the problem was my foot still killed. It hurt to put pressure on it, it hurt to move it, it hurt to do nothing. We still biked home and that was that.

The next day my foot was still hurting and we had a soccer game. I woke up early and checked the spot again and I found a broken sewing needle so I called “Mom, I think there is part of a sewing needle in my foot”

“No way,” she responded.

“Wait, I have an idea,” I said back. I ran to the kitchen and pulled out a rare earth magnet to see if it would stick to my foot. And believe it or not it did and it hurt too because the magnet was yanking on a needle that was in my foot that would not come out. Either that or I had magnetic bone in that one area of my foot.

An hour later after attempting many times to get it out of my foot we decided to miss my soccer game and go to the ER. We (me and my mom who was with me) were given a room quite quickly as it was not very busy. A doctor then came in and sent me to get an x-ray to see if they could see the needle in there. We did not see the results until another hour passed... and then finally the doctor came in confirming, "Yes, there is a needle in your foot, the pediatrician will come in maybe 45 minutes to see what he can do," he said in that matter of fact way.

When the pediatrician finally came he told us he maybe could get it out today or almost definitely get it out another day. Of course I chose today I wanted the damn thing out that second. So, he said he would have to do a mini incision in my foot and that this was successful 75% of the time. When the process began I have to admit I was a little scared. But actually the worst part was getting the anesthesia in my foot. I could not at all feel the one-fifth of an inch incision he made. Before I knew it he pulled out the needle, all eight-sixteenths of an inch of it. Finally, I thought, it's over! I would have jumped for joy if my foot did not feel paralyzed from the anesthesia. And yes, I still have that needle in a box in my room.

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PeeWee VHL championship 2016-17

Lucca Alcaraz Valens

Our team last season played Burlington in the Valley Hockey League (VHL) championship. We were the number 1 team in the league and Burlington was number 3. We started off the season terrible. We had no chemistry on our team. We lost the first 17 games. We had hit rock bottom. But then after a pump-up talk from our coach we decided we needed to do better. So we played really well and pushed ourselves to do better. Every practice we gave it everything we had. I remember at one practice our coach made us do suicides for 30 minutes straight. I was seething with hatred at the drill but it did make us much better. We went on to win the next 20 games and make the playoffs in the first seed.

For the first round of the playoffs we worked on puck control. In practice we would pass the puck behind the net, then skate up the ice and pass back to the other player. Then it was a 1-on-1 with a goalie.

I was jumpy and nervous for the first game of the playoffs, but I really didn't need to be because we won 5-2. It was a pretty boring game. We scored 4 goals really quickly then they scored 2 and with a minute left they pulled their goalie and we scored. So we moved on to the quarter finals, which was really exciting.

In the quarterfinals what we needed to work on was harder passes and shooting from farther out. In practice we took shots from the blue line only and nowhere else. We also worked on passes; when we had possession we had to make 5 passes before we could shoot. In the quarter finals we played against Medford, which was the number 2 team. They had had one less win than us. On game day our coach said it didn't matter how many wins or losses they had it only mattered how we play. We went out there and they scored 2 goals faster than you can supercalifragilisticexpialidocious. I was thinking about how to pump up the team so I went out on the ice and scored a goal. That pumped up the team and our team went on to win the game 4-3. We were in the semifinals.

In the semifinals we were to play North Reading. They were a team with 0 offense power but 1,000,000 defense power. Their defense was amazing plus they had a kid with amazing speed, so in practice our offense worked on shooting from far out and defense worked on pushing forward. Then a day before the game I got sick. No fever but I was a little sick. I still played in the game though.

In the first period they went up 3-0. In the second period Peter sniped a shot past Bardowski. 3-1. Then Jamie scored a goal and it was 3-2. In the third period I scored a goal. 3-3. Now there was 1 minute left and Zach shot from far out and it bounced in the goal! We were up 4-3. One minute later we heard the buzzer buzz and we threw our gloves in the air and swarmed the goalie with joy, **WE WERE GOING TO THE FINALS!!!!**

On the day of the finals I had a fever of 104 but I told my mom I **NEEDED** to play. After a long discussion my mom let me play. I got pumped up and forgot about how sick I was. In the locker room our coach told us that it didn't matter whether we win or lose, all that

matters is that we play our hardest. Also, that she was so proud of us for making it this far and having such a comeback season. We went out on the ice and we wanted to win.

The first period I would like to say was interesting but in truth it was pretty boring; nothing really happened. It was a back and forth period mostly in the neutral zone (middle of the ice). In the second period they were on an attack and Tuna (Charlie) poke checked the guy with the puck and I got it and passed it to Jamie who hit a one time pass to Peter who sniped it top left corner, **WE WERE UP 1-0!** Then in the third period the other team shot the puck and it was going top shelf but out of nowhere our goalie Ilsa threw up her glove and caught the puck. It was an amazing save. With 3 minutes left in the game Zach shot the puck from the blue line and it went five hole. **WE SCORED AGAIN! 2-0!** Then we shut down on defense and I heard the buzzer sound and immediately threw my gloves in the air and rushed the goalie **WE JUST WON THE CHAMPIONSHIP!**

When they called my name to get my trophy I still could not believe what had just happened. We won 2-0 in the finals, our goalie had a shutout, and there were only 8 shots on goal the entire game. This was by way and far the best day of my entire life.

From this I learned that you should never give up on anything in life, because if you really want it anyone can achieve it.

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Dancing on a plane

Franklin Alvarado

One time I was dancing in a plane and got in trouble. Here's how it went down. I was going to Miami, Florida. The day before I was trying to go to sleep but I couldn't because of how nervous I was because I thought what are we going to do after we get out of the airport of Miami. I didn't want to get lost, somewhere I've never been. The next day we got to Logan Airport. I was also scared because I have never been on a plane before and my hands were sweaty because I was thinking what if the plane runs out of fuel, I didn't want to die like that. We got through TSA and we went to get food, By we I mean me, my dad, my aunt, and my friend. About 30 minutes later we had to board the plane. About two hours into the flight, I wanted to listen to music and I put in my headphones, suddenly my favorite song played from my "Litt" Playlist. The song was "Bounce Back" by Big Sean. I was feeling so happy, I unbuckled my plane belt and got up and started dancing in the middle row of the plane. About 3 minutes after I started dancing a flight attendant behind me told me to take my seat. I could not hear her or see her because I had the headphones in. Plus I was 10 so I didn't know what were the rules on a plane. The flight attendant told me again to take my seat. Next I know she is behind me, I turned around, she took off my headphones and started yelling at me, I forgot what she said some nonsense I think. About 1 hour later we land. **I JUST LANDED IN MIAMI!**

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An afternoon along a river bed

Rui José Robert Carr Garcia Connelly Teixeira

It was in early September, We were visiting my sister on her college campus when we decided to go to the local book store. So we piled in the car and left the campus gates, then began to wind down a particularly serpent like road, with leaves rusted and using their last strength to cling to the branches but for many to no avail. Though the air was chilling the sun was warm and clear, we pulled into the parking lot and marched across a bridge that spanned the river near which the bookstore had been built adjacent.

My family entered and immediately split as though there was something guiding them to their respective corners but in the clutches of boredom I passed the shelves laden with books and lore. And while the others around me would amuse themselves for a few hours in their fictitious world constructed of paper and ink, I looked out on the river.

Stepping out onto the bank I lay witness to a massive flowing beast, its roar was defining, and its waters foaming and pouring out like a rabid dog. While I sat enchanted by this stream I decided to cast a leaf into the calmer water up ahead, the leaf was brown and its ends were curled up. I gently cast it and watched as though on the leaf were microscopic mariners set out on their maiden voyage on a barge constructed of plant matter. I decided to follow the ambitious little seafarer down the bank.

Very quickly it began to outpace me, but my journey had begun and I knew I had to venture to the ends of the river for I could see no better use of my time there anyways. Though for a short time my journey was quite easy, the bank's incline became increasingly steep, I had to grasp a tree and hoist myself up to the next ledge. As I stepped up onto the grass covered rock I noticed it looked over a "waterfall" of sorts, I stopped for a few minutes just looking over the roaring water contemplating events that had transpired earlier in the day, and even at one point nature itself. The whole time I was at peace and calm but still I yearned for adventure.

I then continued onward, I then stumbled onto a fallen tree suspended over the river like a bridge, I grappled with the idea of cross-

ing it but I chose to continue as I was. I crawled over the gargantuan log and ever so gently crept towards the bank.

There I saw what presumed to be the ruins of some ancient mill, It was constructed of stone but the doors and roof had long since weathered away leaving nothing but two walls a door frame and a massive metal plate. It was of course like many testaments to days passed littered with cigarette butts and empty beer cans. After stopping to admire the old stonework I then left out the other side, I saw there another wall though this one was shorter and crumbling, there was also a dip in the ground covered in leaves. This being the only way through I thought nothing of it and marched through, but with my first step I quickly discovered that the floor was not of solid construction but of mud. Believing there was an end and dry land nearby I marched forward but to no avail. With every step I took I sank deeper into the mud, I turned and tried to go back but every time I raised my leg It felt like other worldly hands clinging to my ankles pulling me back down into the unstable earth. Confused and in a panic I looked to the old wall and grabbed the top and with all my might I hoisted myself over and onto the hard compact dirt, reeling from the experience I considered turning back but that would only mean going through the mud once more a task I was not willing to take part in.

As I marched toward the river I saw a cottage nearby, I came to the realization that I was on someone's property. Not wanting to be shunned or worse I dashed for the riverbank even though the mud had clung to my pants and had increased the weight of them making it cumbersome to run.

Once I returned to the brook I saw a massive bush. I attempted to brush it aside but the sharp thorns only lashed back at me as though they were full of hateful rage. Of the two paths I could take one was back on the homestead; not wishing to trespass any more than I already had I chose the other option, a path made of spaced out stepping stones.

Trying desperately not to fall in even though the water was shallow at this point and very weak in terms of force, to my own surprise I managed to maneuver around the beastly vines and thorns of the bush, and continued on a comparatively easy stroll along the riverbed.

With every step I took there was a crunch of leaves beneath my feet as though I were unsettling the ancient earth. and the trees were full of grandeur even though their once vibrant greens had since faded into a possibly even more elegant array of bright colors I admired their beauty while I can as even then the leaves were raining down before my very eyes, even the cacophony produced by the stream, in stark contrast with the peaceful scene only seemed to complement it.

Though my awe was short lived, as I soon found myself at odds with another obstacle, this time the flowing brook diverged with a particularly small island of sorts between the two streams: thankfully there was another fallen tree spanning the gap (I began to ponder if their placement was deliberate) but nevertheless I trod over to the island where I found there to be yet another gap, this time there was no easy bridge so I leaped over, successfully.

But yet again the path became increasingly steeper to the point where I felt as though if I must cling to the earth 'til my hand began to blister else fall into the murky torrent below, but deter me it did not. With every minor slip or stumble a shot of adrenaline coursed through my veins each time for a brief moment I was sure I would fall. But I made it across the wall of soil and onto another flat plane, a place to catch my breath after the ordeal I just endured a momentary rest was well deserved.

I continued on my quest with no end in sight, though in the distance I saw a bridge. This path unlike the others was straight and It was on this path that I peered upon a particular pale pebble the size of palm and the color of milk and remarkably smooth. I pocketed the stone and stepped under the bridge.

The side not submerged was steep and riddled with stones. Overcoming this obstacle would require a considerable amount of strength. Alas I was exhausted by my previous trials. Instead I climbed defeated, out onto the road leading back to the store. I was tired and limping, I paused rolled up my pant leg to see blood. I must have bashed my knee against a rock face and in my determination not have even felt the pain. Worn out and battle scarred I returned to the bookstore, still fiddling with the stone in my hand. after a brief period of wandering I reunited with my family and we left.

It's still there, the end of the river, perhaps I will return one day to conquer it, until then it remains there in some distant place not seen by my eyes. How far down is it, well perhaps I could look at a map but where's the adventure in that? For sometimes one must not look for the destination, and though this proverb is cliché at this point, it is still very applicable and true, it's the journey that matters. After all the Odyssey was not about how Odysseus stepped through the threshold of his villa.

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Achieve success

Jose Aguilar

If I achieve success it's because of my hustle
My dedication, my perseverance
My hard work, my persistence
My ability to never give up even when times are rough
My ability to do things on my own
My ability to believe in myself when no one else does
Hard work never goes unseen
Nothing is ever given it's earned for
If I achieve success just know it wasn't easy.

© 2018 Jose Aguilar

The head injury

Lizabeth Alarcon

“Are we there yet?” I ask my dad eagerly waiting for us to get to our destination. Even though we have only been in the car for about ten minutes, it feels like an eternity.

As my dad turns the corner and enters the park, I excitedly jump in my car seat. We step out of the car and head over to the grass.

As my eyes scan the entire field, I spot my cousin. Immediately I feel my face light up and my lips curl into a small smile. Since I was barely five, it was really exciting to see him play. Especially since it was my first time ever watching a live soccer game. While the whole team enters the field, my dad takes my hand and guides me in the same direction, just so I was able to get a closer look. We stopped right at the edge of the dividing line.

For the first half of the game everything seems to be going great. My mood is nice and cheerful, and even though I didn’t know what was going on at first I was still amazed. I look behind me and I see the rest of my family screaming at the top of their lungs, rooting for my cousin’s team. When I go back to paying attention to the game I see that they have the ball. They pass it from person to person, getting ready to score another goal. The last person to receive it is my cousin. He sees this as an opportunity and swings his leg back, eventually making his foot kick the ball so hard it passes by all of the opposing players, and goes straight into the goal. Seconds later I hear a strong roar come from the bleachers, praising the point we just scored.

Because I was standing for so long, I got tired and decided to sit right on the grass. Since I was wearing a dress that day my legs were bare, so I could tell that the grass was wet and slippery. Then I hear my family’s screams start up again, so I put all of my focus back into the game. I was so distracted that I didn’t notice that one of the players was getting dangerously close to the edge that my dad and I were in. That player in particular had the ball, so all of the other players were sprinting toward him trying to take the ball away. Next thing that I knew, the unexpected happens. It seemed like everything went down in slow motion after that moment. The player with

the ball slips on the grass and his foot collides with my right temple. Because of such force and my surprise, I fall backwards. Almost immediately, a throbbing pain builds up in that area. I try not to cry but the pain was so great that I couldn't hold it in. My tears start right then and there, and my even breathing turns into short gasps. My parents run to me as fast as they can. My dad scoops me up off the grass while my mom tries to take a look at my temple. It formed into a huge red bump and is tender to the touch. The very last thing I remember is being driven home and having to put ice on it to minimize the swelling. Now, I am always reminded of this story when watching soccer games. Instead of repeating the same mistake, my dad and I have both come to an agreement that we should never get too close to the players while there is a game taking place.

© 2018 Lizabeth Alarcon

Josephine Vincent

Christopher Thomson

“Captain, where is she”?

“She's in room 216. You are to find out everything she knows, not a detail is to be left out.”

The detective walked into the room with a notepad. He pulled out the chair and sat down. He gave me a look of disgust and anger. I could see he wanted me to be afraid of him, but I didn't fear him nor anyone. He wrote the date on his paper, *November 6th, 1925*. Then he looked back up at me.

“So, how does a girl like you become a gangster?” he asked.

“Well, I wasn't always a gangster,” I said with a smirk.

“That is correct. You were a prostitute for some time,” he said while looking down on his paper.

“You're a young, beautiful, and clearly intelligent women. Why waste yourself on something so toxic?” he asked.

“Well, a girl has to make money somehow and I never liked the idea of marriage. To me it's just legalized slavery,” I explained.

“Well, Miss Vincent, tell me how this all started,” he said. I paused for a moment to recollect all my thoughts and memories and then I spoke.

“It all started about a year ago. The date was May 7th, 1924. It was a Friday. That night I had on my black lace lingerie and rosey red lipstick. My hair was messy but not too messy, just messy enough to attract any man. That night, I knew I was going to make lots of money. My client walked in and he grabbed my rear end then we made love. He slipped a twenty dollar bill right where my breasts were and I gave him a smile. The smile I gave to all my clients. It was a smile that said until next time, a smile that had them all coming back for more. I walked out of the room. Right down the hall I heard a door slam. I went down the hall to investigate. When I got to the room where all the noise was, I heard arguing between two men. I knew it wasn't over Arabella, the prostitute that worked in that room, because she just started and there was no way she was already that good. I got closer, close enough to hear everything that was being said:

“I know you've been working with Demetri and his boys,' a furious voice exclaimed.

'Robert, you don't understand. He made me... He said he was going to kill my wife.' Another voice cried out.

'You know that loyalty is before all else, now say goodnight you bastard,' the furious voice said.'”...

Bam! Bam! Bam! Three gunshots and then a *scream!* It was from Arabella. Then...*Bam! Bam! Bam!* Three more gunshots. I felt a feeling I hadn't felt since my father was alive, *fear*. I quickly went to my room, threw on my dress and coat, and went to my apartment. I made myself a hot cup of tea hoping it would calm me, but it did nothing. *Why did I have to hear that? What are the coppers going to ask me? What if the gangster comes after me?* I couldn't stop thinking about what might happen to me. After a long night of thinking I decided to lie, lying was the only thing that would protect me at this point.

The next day, I put one of my finest day dresses and a coat on, then walked down to work. I looked around and it was a total crime scene, coppers everywhere. On the floor lay two body bags. I knew that the bags had that man and Arabella inside. I walked past with my head down. One of the girls at my job, Catherine, walked over to me.

“Can you believe what happened?” she told me.

“What happened?” I asked.

“You didn't hear? There were two murders here last night,” she said in a quiet but interested tone.

“Really?” I said, trying to sound surprised

“They have been interviewing people all day, I think you're next,” she told me. *What the hell!* I thought. I felt my stomach drop low and my pulse quicken. I felt sweat coming on. I quickly reached for a handkerchief in my coat pocket to dab the sweat away. I couldn't let anyone know that I was nervous because if I looked nervous then lying wouldn't work.

“Josephine Vincent,” said the head detective. “I'd like to speak with you.”

Damn it! I said to myself. I gave a smile to the detective. “Of course sir,” I said.

“All right. Follow me this way,” said the detective. I followed him to my boss's office. I tried to distract myself from my nervousness by looking at the paintings on the walls, but it didn't work. I was too nervous.

“Miss Vincent, on the night of May 7th, 1924, what were you doing?” asked the detective. I looked down at my hands. They were shaking so fast. I then looked back up at the detective. “I was busy providing my services to a client,” I said.

“And after that?” he asked.

“Excuse me,” I said with a quiet voice, for if I said it loud my voice would have sounded nervous.

“What did you do after you provided your services?” he repeated in frustration.

“Oh...after I took a nap on the bed in the room,.” I answered. He gave me a puzzled look, for a second then that puzzled look slowly turned to a smile as he looked through his notes.

“Well, Miss Vincent, that is all. Thank you,” he said as he shook my hand.

“My pleasure,” I said with a smile that I forced myself to make. I walked out of the room, then sighed. I told my boss I would be going home. I came home around five o'clock.

“Hello, Miss Vincent,” said a mysterious voice. I couldn't tell who it was but it sounded very familiar.

“Who are you?” I said as I took a step back. Then the light went on.

“My name is Robert Delgado,” he said as he rose up his head slowly. I quickly remembered his voice. That thick New Yorker accent. *He's the gangster that murdered that man and Arabella*, I thought to myself. He sat there with a smirk. He was a rather fat man with a clean cut suit and a fedora on. He had dark brown hair that was slicked back with oil. I quickly took off my shoe and raised it in the air.

“What the hell are you doing in my house you dirty bastard, you try one thing and I'll clock you right in the eye,” I shouted. He raised two fingers from both hands and pointed them forward. Then two men in a suit and fedora came out of the dark side of the apartment holding guns in their hands.

He chuckled then said, "Believe me toots if I wanted to kill you I would have done it when I saw you run away from that room that I murdered those two people in."

My mouth hung wide open.

"Why didn't you kill me when you had the chance?" I asked him.

"Well it's simple. I saw an opportunity to make money and I took it," he responded in a very confident tone.

"What can I do for you?" I asked him.

"You can make me rich. You're young and beautiful. You can seduce any man without even trying. You'll make a lot of money. Are you in?"

I thought about it for a second. *I do need the money. Being a prostitute doesn't pay much. I should have a real profession.* Though there was a part of me that said no, I stuck out my hand and said, "I'm in."

"Meet me on Andrew Street, inside the abandoned warehouse at seven o'clock sharp," he told me. "And don't say a word to anyone about this little encounter."

I kept on the clothes I was wearing from early that day because I didn't know what to wear on an occasion like this. I arrived at the spot at seven o'clock on the dot, not a moment later, not a moment before. I knocked on the door. A tiny slit open from the top of the door and two eyes peeked out.

"Who are you and who sent you?" he asked.

"My name is Josephine Vincent," I said, "And Mr. Robert Delgado sent me." Without any hesitation, he opened the door, the rusty hinges creaked. The sound hurt my ears but I refused to show any sign of weakness. He and another man escorted me down the hall with guns in their hands. I was guarded and scared at the same time, but I kept a stern face. They led me to a room where there were about thirty men all dressed up in suits. The only thing missing from their suit was their blazers, but I would keep off my blazer working in a hot place like that.

"Miss Vincent, you've made it," said Robert happily.

"Please call me Josephine," I insisted. He grabbed my face and gave me a kiss on my cheek. I gave him a warm smile. Then behind him five men appeared.

“Josephine, meet your new partners in crime,” Robert said. “This is Charles, John, Patrick, James, and William.” The suits must have been uniforms because all the men had on the same clean cut suit. I shook all of their hands except for James who kissed my hand. I could tell he was a flirt, but a handsome one at that.

“We are currently working on a project to rob some heirlooms from the Buchanan house upstate, Thomas Buchanan,” he explained.

“Well, where do I play into all this?” I asked.

“You are the most important part, the distraction. We’ve been studying Thomas Buchanan for quite some time now and we know he loves his hookers. You are to distract him with pleasure while the boys get the heirlooms,” he explained as all the men in the room chuckled at every sentence.

“Well when is all this going down?” I asked him

“Tonight.” He and the boys directed me to a vault. Inside were shoes, dresses, lingerie, boas, turbans, necklaces, rings, earrings, headbands, and feathers. My heart couldn't take it. I went inside to change. When I came out I had on a black lace veil covering my face, black gloves that went all the way up my arms, a trench coat and under that I had on nicely laced two-piece lingerie, fishnet stockings with dark lipstick, and smoky eyeshadow. I felt like the most confident, promiscuous, dangerous woman in the world.

“My oh my. I'm smart,” Robert said with a smile on his face.

“You are going to make me rich.”

“Thank you,” I responded as my cheeks began to blush. Me and the boys went outside and stepped into a car. It was a nice black car that blended with the night. It was an hour drive. Every minute, I could feel my pulse getting quicker and my breath getting shorter. When we arrived at our destination, I saw a grand house that sat on a tall hill. We drove the car midway up the hill and then walked the rest of the way. There were fifteen marble steps that led to the door. I rang the doorbell and out came a well dressed man who I assumed was his butler.

“Hello ma'am, are you here to see Mr. Buchanan?” he asked me.

“Yes,” I quickly responded. He opened the door wide. Inside were magnificent fine velvet carpets and a beautiful array of chande-

liers. Paintings with the finest style. Mr. Buchanan walked down the stairs with a smirk on his face. He was a handsome fellow and well dressed too.

“Hello,” he said.

“Hello, Mr. Buchanan,” I responded. He took my hand and kissed it, then guided me upstairs. He gave me a glass of champagne and demanded that I pour it down my coat. He then ripped my coat off me and gave me a passionate kiss. He ripped my stockings and then tried to remove my veil but I refused. He threw me on the bed and then proceeded to kiss my neck. I felt my pulse quicken as he grabbed my leg with a great force. Then...*tap, tap, tap*, the sound I heard came from the window and I managed to get on top of him to get a better view. I could tell it was the boys trying to tell me that they were done. I quickly severed my body from his.

“What the hell are you doing? I'm paying you for a reason,” he yelled.

“Well, I'm done, keep your money,” I told him.

“Whatever, leave you dirty whore!” He yelled back me. I quickly went out the door and ran inside the car.

“Did you get the heirlooms?” I asked.

“Yes we did and it wasn't easy,” Patrick responded. We made our way back to the meeting place. Robert was ecstatic when we showed him the heirlooms that we got. After a little while I went home. It had been an interesting day. The next day, I went down to work. It was still a crime scene down there.

“Hello, Mrs. Baker,” I said to my boss.

“Hello, Josephine,” she responded.

“Mrs. Baker, I'm here to tell you that I quit,” I told her.

“Why?” she asked with a concerned look on her face.

“I found a better place to work at,” I told her. I then went out the door and went down to the meeting place. The door man, Antony, let me in. As I walked in, I heard a panic. When I walked into the room, all eyes turned to me.

“Robert is pissed!” Patrick exclaimed.

“Why?” I asked. Patrick stared at me for a while with narrow eyes. He then passed me the newspaper. *The woman with a veil steals millions of dollars worth of heirlooms from Thomas Buchanan.* My head shot quickly back up at Patrick.

"It's in the paper!" I exclaimed.

"Yes it is, and the boss is waiting for you in his office." I quickly ran down to his office. *I don't want to die today*, I thought to myself. When I walked in, he had his feet up on his desk and the newspaper wide open covering his face.

"How on earth can you possibly let this happen!" Robert yelled as he slammed the newspaper right back down on his desk.

"Robert, please let me fix this," I told him.

"There is only one way to fix this," Robert said as he pulled out a pocket knife from under his desk. The knife was clean and sharp with a black handle that reminded me of the night. It was so clean that you could substitute it for a mirror.

"This is how you will fix it," he said as he laid the knife on the table. I stared at it for a moment to contemplate whether I should do it or not. After a moment of thinking, I grabbed the knife and said, "I'll do it."

Patrick drove me all the way up the hill this time and let me out right in front of Thomas Buchanan's house. I rang the doorbell and out came Buchanan's butler. With no hesitation, I quickly stabbed him deep in the chest with the knife then, yanked it out of him. The ground made a loud *thump* when his body hit the floor. Then I heard quick but loud footsteps coming down the stairs and I knew it was Thomas Buchanan. I quickly hid on the side of the staircase. When he reached the bottom of the staircase I tapped him lightly on the the shoulder. When his body was completely turned to mine I took the knife and stabbed him right in the heart. Then I quickly yanked it out and went out the door. When I got in the car, Patrick gave me a nod and I gave one back to say yes, I've done the deed. After we went back to the meeting place.

"Did you do it?" Robert asked with a firm voice. I gently nodded my head. Then he smiled back. I reached in my pocket to give the knife back to him.

"No," he said firmly.

"Why not?" I asked.

"Well since you've just committed a crime you need to be more guarded," he told me.

"Here," he said as he handed me a gun.

“You’ll need this too. You’re not just an ordinary citizen anymore, you’re a gangster now. I looked down at the gun, then I looked back up at him and smiled. It was like a trophy. Growing up I didn’t win a lot of things and when I did, my deadbeat father was never there to congratulate me. This was my trophy and Robert was my father. The whole gang was my family. That night, I went home and washed off the knife then sat it and the gun on my nightstand. The next morning I got a phone call from Mrs. Baker asking me to come to the parlor. I didn’t have a good feeling about this, so I brought my pocket knife and gun with me. When I walked into her office I saw her and the head detective, the same one who interviewed me sitting right next to her. “Hello Josephine,” Mrs. Baker said with a still look on her face.

“Hello, Mrs. Baker,” I responded with the same amount of attitude she was giving me.

“I’m sure you remember the head detective.”

“Why yes, I do.”

“Sit down, we have some questions for you.” She pulled out the newspaper and on it, it said *Thomas Buchanan and his butler murdered.*

“How sad,” I said with a concerned look on my face trying my best to act surprised.

“Did you have anything to do with the murder of Thomas Buchanan and his butler?” the detective asked.

“Of course not,” I said firmly.

“Well, you did quit because you said you had another job a day after Mr. Buchanan was robbed and he was murdered the day his robbery hit the newspaper. Also in the article he said it was a prostitute with black lace lingerie on, and I know how much you adore black lace lingerie,” Mrs. Baker said loudly.

“Also, you were the only nervous one during the interview process,” the detective added.

“Now, I’m going to ask one more time, did you do it?” the detective said as he placed his hand onto his gun, getting ready to pull it out. I knew I had no choice, I had to do it. I quickly took my gun out and shot them both in the head. After that, I ran out the door and down to the meeting place or shall I call it headquarters.

“Robert, Robert!” I screamed.

“What, what is it doll?” he said with a concerned expression on his face.

“They know. They know,” I said trying to catch my breath.

“Listen dollface you’re gonna need to calm down if you want me to understand you,” Robert said firmly. I took a breath, then looked back up at him.

“Good, now who are they and what do they know?” he asked.

“The police know I killed Thomas Buchanan,” I told him.

“How?” he asked as he closed his eyes and rubbed his temples.

“I went to work today, because my old boss called me in then she and the head detective were interrogating me. They said that there was a lot of evidence to support that I was a suspect. Then I shot them both in the head. My worry is that the whole police station thinks that it was me,” I ranted.

“You’re gonna need to stay here for a couple of days just until this whole thing blows over,” Robert told me. So I did just that. I stayed there until the scandal and rumors blew over. After the scandal I continued to be a gangster. I became known as the lady with a veil. Any murder didn’t trace back to me, but to the lady with a veil. Every crime I committed, I wore a veil. Me and the gang’s rivalry with the coppers never stopped. We always had to be careful not to get caught and we always were one step ahead of the police that was until one night.

November 3rd, 1925. Me and the boys were having a brawl with Demetri and his boys. It all went down at Chetu Nightclub in Manhattan. I walked in with a white lace veil over my head, a rhinestone shimmer dress on, lily white gloves that went up to just below my shoulders, and two shimmering bracelets, and white heels. About fifteen of our men were outside watching out. What we didn’t know at the time was someone called the coppers. When I was in the club, I saw Demetri. I pulled out my knife, then I quickly walked over to him.

“Listen Demetri, we’ve had enough of your bullshit, now you’re gonna tell me where the money is now or you can get stabbed, your choice,” I told him as I pointed the knife at his back. Then...

Bam!Bam!Bam! Three gunshots coming from outside Robert went outside and I followed him. When I saw it was the police, I went back to the entrance way. Then...*Bam!* Right before my eyes Rob-

ert was shot. I quickly ran over to him, then placed my hand over his wound.

“Robert, please don't die,” I said crying like a child.

“Sorry dollface, but it's my time,” Robert said softly. I smiled back at him. He had humor even through a time like this. He was a true father figure to me.

“Goodbye,” he said as he took his final breath.

“Goodbye,” I said crying. The coppers came over to remove me from him so they could take him but I refused.

“Don't touch me!” I screamed.

“Don't you touch me or him.” They ignored me and picked me up.

“Get off!” I said screaming and kicking. They threw me in the car and I cried my whole way to the station, that's the end.

“You know what happens next, don't you?” the detective said. I nodded my head yes. As they brought me to the electric chair, I had one person on my mind, Josephine Vincent.

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Dear Annie

Terrence Andrew Blondin

“Stop it! Dad, you're hurting her!” Mark screamed in tears.

“It'll teach her a lesson for sneaking out of the house,” responded Mark senior, as he held his own daughter from the back of the head, crushing her face against a wall, twisting her arm behind her back in a gruesome manner.

Sobbing with great pain, Annie pleaded, “Please, let go. I only played in the woods, there's nothing in the woods.”

“Shut up you whore! I saw you with that faggot Carl the other day, you just snuck away to make out with him.”

“Dad, we are twelve years ol—”

“Give me my belt.”

“What?”

“Give me my belt, boy!” Mark slowly backed out of the dark hallway and bolted for the door. He got about five feet before feeling the 300 pounds of his dad's body crashing down on him.

“Ah!” Mark fell out of his bed in a sweat. The room was of an ebony color, except for the glittering snow outside. When his eyes adjusted to the darkness he glanced at his watch.

“3:40,” he whispered to himself.

He had been having these dreams ever since his sister’s death. It had been vacation, so Mark came home to see the only family left to him: Aunt Mary, Uncle Bob, and his sister, Annie. He came in from Killington Mountain School in New Hampshire, and Annie came from Harvard. She was the smartest person he knew, and they had a very strong bond between them, because of the hardship they went through from living with an abusive father. Their mother Nancy was never home and their father Mark senior was an alcoholic. He had died from a heart attack in the middle of the night. Nobody cried at his funeral. Nancy left the country and didn't come back. She never divorced, or tried to claim ownership over her children or any of her belongings that were still in their house in Maine, she just disappeared. But none of that mattered, because they had both made it through their miserable childhoods alive and together.

During vacations, Mark and Annie loved to hike together; they would get up at 3:00 A.M. and get back at 6:00 P.M. It was during one of these trips in winter vacation that it happened. They were going up a mountain path on the edge of a cliff. Annie tripped, some soil gave way, and Mark was left watching her flailing body fall down the sixty foot drop to her imminent death.

In most movies when someone falls from a high place, there is no blood, the person’s body just hits the ground and nothing happens; but Annie fell head first, so when she hit the giant boulder at the bottom, it looked like someone had spilled paint all over the place. The only thought going through his mind for the next week was *I could have done something*. Uncle Bob organized and paid for the funeral. Mary and Bob’s house was a kind of oasis for Mark and Annie. They always counted down the days until the next vacation, and whenever they heard the crunching of wheels on gravel in their driveway, and saw the gray Cadillac Cimarron roll up, they both jumped up and sprinted out the door.

The coffin was made of a bright mahogany that reflected the sun so well that it could probably set a sheet of paper on fire if you held it close enough. Mark didn't understand how people thought that

putting a dead body in a 3,000 dollar box and burying it six feet under the ground was a good idea. He had never believed in heaven or that people were the play toys of some greater power. When he was younger he thought that, 'If there really is a God that watches over everyone, then how are my sister and I being beat every day by a wasted father?'

Nothing special happened at the funeral, and by special he meant something that belonged in a Stephen King novel. Everyone gathered and listened to the priest for the Mass, then slowly but surely, everyone went back home and returned to their daily lives. And here Mark was, a month later, in his dad's old hunting shack in the mountains, and still not over the fact that the person he was closest to was now gone.

The whistle of the wind as it cut around the edges of the house was soothing. It was snowing so badly that Mark didn't even know if he would be able to get through the front door. He liked the idea of being in a small sheltered place in the middle of a big storm. He didn't know why.

Remembering that he was on the floor next to his bed, Mark got up and walked over to the bathroom to take a shower. After that he proceeded to executing his morning chores which included eating an egg for breakfast, washing the dishes, and cleaning up the inside and outside of his abode.

For the past few days the weather had really been taking a turn for the worse. One day he had to jump out of his bedroom window with a shovel to clear the wall of snow in front of his door, but this day the snow was soft enough for him to push through.

As he shoveled the snow from his doorstep, he had the weird sensation you get when you are being watched. He turned around to see if he could spot anything, but after a few minutes of silent contemplation of the landscape, he heaved a big sigh and got back to the task at hand.

The strange feeling that he wasn't alone persisted throughout the day, as Mark was chopping down trees for firewood; as he hiked up the dirt path that lead up the mountain to admire the view; and even in his own home while he cooked dinner.

At first he thought that maybe it was some animal following him around, but the feeling of the presence became progressively heavy.

At some point while he ate, he even thought he heard a creaking plank behind his door.

Mark started to whisper to himself, "It's just your mind. You're way too paranoid. And besides, why would anybody want to stalk you?"

Then he heard it, "It was your fault." Mark immediately froze. He had no idea where the voice had come from, so he jumped up and reached for the M48 hunting rifle that was hung on the wall behind him. For about five minutes he stood there, his back to the wall, scanning the room through his scope. Finally, when he had gathered his wits, he walked towards his front door.

"It had to have come from there. There is no way that he could have gotten into my house without me hearing." Mark's front door opened inward from the inside like most, so it would be hard to quickly open the door and... Mark didn't even know what he would do then.

"There's no time to be thinking this through," he convinced himself as he reached for the lock.

The door swung open and hit the wall. His gun pointed in front of him, Mark carefully stepped out, and swept the clearing through his scope. The night sky glittered with stars, the snow in the glade was perfectly lit up by the moon, and a few owls could be heard faintly in the distance.

The barrel slowly lowered until the gun was by his side. The ambience was so relaxing that Mark almost forgot what had happened.

Crack. Mark almost instantly turned towards the sound. Under the shadow of a towering evergreen, he thought he saw the shadow of a man.

"Who are you?" Mark yelled. The figure turned around and disappeared into the forest. Mark sprinted through the clearing to where he had seen the ghostly figure. He didn't have a jacket, gloves, a hat, or even shoes.

If this man was trying to get away from Mark, he was doing a really bad job: there were clearly defined footprints leading up the mountain, and he could still hear the cracking of the man's heavy body on the forest floor.

Mark followed the footprints silently and stealthily. The only good times he had had with his dad was when he went hunting with

him. Mark senior would force himself to stop drinking for two or three days before they went out so he would be completely sober. They would go out, just the two of them and stay in the shack for the whole weekend while Annie stayed at Uncle Bob and Aunt Mary's.

He was very good at hunting. He could probably walk up three feet behind an animal in the forest without it noticing, and track one in the middle of a blizzard. So to no surprise, it was easy for him to follow this person.

After ten minutes, the tracks led to the mountain path that Mark went up every day. He decided to speed up his pace so that he could find the man faster. He reached the edge of the forest, where the soil was replaced by the stone of the mountain.

By instinct, Mark went over to the top of the precipice where he admired the view every day, sat down on the log that he had put there, and looked out at the forests of Maine.

"It must look like a green ocean from a helicopter," a familiar voice uttered. Mark spun around, and there he was, the 300 pounds of rot that was Mark Miller, senior. He looked as if he hadn't aged a hair since he died, the same six feet in height, the same crazy hair and messy beard, and the same bulging belly.

"What the hell? You're dead! You died six years ago. We buried you, I saw your body," Mark exclaimed in terror, but his father kept on going as if he hadn't heard him.

"I've never been in a helicopter before. Have you?"

"What do you want?" Mark wanted this conversation over with.

"I am here to tell you that it was your fault."

"What?"

"You could have done something. But you decided to just let her fall."

"That is not how it happened! I was too far away to reach her! And besides, you're not one to criticize, you tormented us both for our whole childhoods." *So this is why he is here*, Mark thought, *To rub it in?*

"Now now, you know that that isn't true." He couldn't take it any more. Mark sat back down on the bench and began to sob. His father was right, no matter how much he tried to deny it, he could

have saved her. Mark senior sat down onto the bench next to his son and put his arm around his shoulder.

“Get off of me!” Mark yelled as he shoved his father’s arm away and got up to face him.

“Why would you come here from god knows where just to tell me that I’m guilty? And where were you for these past six years?”

“I’ve been decaying in a cheap coffin. Doesn’t smell the best, I’m going to be honest with you.” Mark started to back away, forgetting that his back was facing the ridge.

“This isn’t real. This is a dream. I’m going cra—” The last thing Mike saw before the total darkness was his father’s figure staring down at him, getting slowly fainter and fainter.

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The Execution

Lucy Gunther

“Da-da-da-da, da-da-da-da...” the wedding bells chimed.

“Alison! Alison! Don’t go!” Nina sobbed, “I can’t lose you. I love you. I would rather live my life in denial than not have you at all.”

“I love you too, but I cannot live in a society where my father gets to sell me off to a husband. Today is my eighteenth birthday, it’s now or never, I don’t have a choice,” Alison responded while she continued to run from her fate.

“Think about your brother. Think about how much it killed your mother to watch your father execute him. She can’t lose another child.”

“Don’t you dare play that card with me! You know I love my mom and I would do anything to avenge my brother’s death, but unlike you I refuse to live the life that society tells me to live.”

“If you leave now, your father is going to hunt you down. You know he will do whatever he has to in order to keep his job. Your brother is the proof. Just think before you do anything too drastic that you cannot take back.”

“I am ready to face the consequences if they come. I am no longer scared of what my father and his government can do to me. Nina, if you really love me and trust me you should come with me.”

“I’m not so sure, Alison.”

Footsteps approached and the wedding bells came to an end. “They are coming for me. You run now or I leave you forever.”

“Okay. Let’s go.”

They sprinted away from the chapel, heading towards the outskirts of the city, hoping to find a way out.

“It will only take a minute or two until they realize I am missing. From here to the city line is about a mile. If we run the whole way it will take us ten minutes,” Alison yelled back to Nina.

“Wait, hold on, how long have you been planning this? Why didn’t you tell me until today?” Nina wheezed, trying to catch her breath.

“I knew you would try and talk me out of it so I waited till the last second to tell you. Once we reach the river there are some bags waiting for us.”

With each step the leaves crunched underneath them and Alison kept the same thought running through her head. *A few more steps ‘til freedom ... just a few more steps.*

They arrived at the river only to find someone waiting for them. Alison’s mother. Alison bolted in the other direction, unsure of what her mother might do next.

“Alison, stop! I’m here to help,” her mother yelled as she followed after her daughter.

“Give me one good reason why I should trust you. After all you are married to our leader,” Alison responded.

“We both know your father, my husband, is an evil man. He murdered his own son. I can’t let him take both of my children away from me. All I want is what is best for you, and if running away to be with the love of your life is what you want, then I am only here to support you.”

“Thank you, Mrs. Murphy,” Nina interjected, trying to break the silence that had formed a barrier between them.

“We have to go now,” Alison’s mother persisted, “If the leader’s daughter is missing they are going to use every man they have trying to find you.”

“Okay, where are we going?” Alison asked.

“Your father has a safe house set up for himself on the off chance society turns against him one day. Inside there are enough

supplies for you to rest and stock up for your journey. It is another mile north after you cross the river. You can stay there for a day or two, but be careful.” Her mother handed her a gun and turned away heading back towards the chapel.

“Mom, what is this for? You’re not coming with us?”

“Your father is a very dangerous man. If he finds out that I had anything to do with your disappearance, he will torture me until I give you up and then have all of our heads. I love you. Stay safe.”

“You heard her, we have to go. She is going to be fine,” Nina exclaimed as she tried to comfort Alison.

They continued down the narrow winding path towards the safe house. Alison kept her head on a swivel looking out for the lurking shadows that may have been hidden within the trees. As they turned a bend in the road, the path suddenly stopped.

“How long have we been traveling?” Alison asked.

“We couldn’t have been traveling much more than a mile from the river,” Nina responded.

“It has to be around here somewhere.”

“Did your mom say what this safe house looked like?”

“No, the only information I got was to follow the path. Maybe you should turn back and see if we missed it. I’ll look around here some more. Holler if you see anything.”

“Okay.”

They searched for an hour, but still no luck.

“Ahhhh!” Nina screeched.

“What’s wrong? Did you find something?” Alison raced over to where the noise was coming from. There was no sign of Nina. “Yell if you can hear me.”

“Down here! Down here!” The sound came from what seemed like underneath Alison. “I think I found the house!”

Alison took a step forward and fell into the same trap that Nina did. At the bottom of the pit was the most magnificent underground mansion that the two girls had ever seen. They had found their safe house.

“What now?” Nina asked.

“Now we rest, eat, and stock up on supplies. You remember what my mother said, we only have a day or two before my father

sends men out this far into the woods. We have to plan ahead and hurry,” Alison claimed.

They found the closest bedroom and got some sleep before the journey ahead.

“Alison, in case anything happens to either one of us, remember that I love you,” Nina said drearly.

“Love you too,” Alison responded as they drifted off to sleep.

A few hours later, Alison was jolted awake when she heard footsteps coming from above and a shockingly familiar voice ringing through her ears. She scrambled to wake up Nina and grabbed for the gun her mother had given her earlier. “Nina, you have to wake up. They are here.”

“Who? Your father?” Nina mumbled, still half asleep.

“Yes. Go hide. I will tell them I’m alone. At least one of us will survive.”

“I cannot let you do that. You can’t die.”

“I’m the one who got you into this mess in the first place. Now go!”

Alison crept out of the bedroom with her gun up and facing the entrance. Two men entered the same way Nina and Alison did previously.

From the other room all Nina heard was yelling. Her eardrums rang as the sound of a gunshot echoed throughout the entire house. The men left as quickly as they had arrived without noticing Nina. She raced to Alison's side but was too late. Alison was gone, just like her brother before her.

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