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DEPLORABLE
INSTINCT

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DEPLORABLE INSTINCT DEMO BOOK (2024): THIS IS NOT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE FINAL COPY.

CHAPTER 1: P110

“Ethan! Are you even paying attention at all?”

Mrs. Fargo sternly screamed across the classroom, directing the room’s attention to me. The very last thing I wanted. Though Mrs. Fargo was correct, I wasn’t paying attention. Not in the slightest.

“Sorry Mrs. Fargo” I muttered defeatedly. I could start to feel my soul drain from my body as she stared at me. Not that I actually cared if Mrs. Fargo felt respected or not, but I wasn’t looking for any trouble today. She begrudgingly stared at me for a second longer with a fake smile before pathetically turning around and continuing to dish out the same old verbal slop that nearly every other student in the classroom was ignoring. You could see the chronic alcoholism and recent divorce taint every last movement the stupid cunt made.

“So are you serious about all that shit dude?” Kevin desperately continued pleading with me across the table that we shared. Kevin was a dumb kid, he lacked self confidence for whatever reason and constantly looked to me for advice. So I liked to fuck with him. If he’s going to be that fucking stupid as to ask, then I might as well make the most out of the situation.

“Yes she’s just trying to make fun of you secretly or bully you. Why would *she* want to be with you?” I condescendingly muttered to Kevin. A perverse little smile overtook my face as I could feel the life drain from his body as his confidence shattered before me. I was of course referring

to Mandy, who is the attractive Mexican girl sitting across the classroom who has been slyly trying to ask Kevin out for days. She most certainly was attracted to him, very much so. A girl like that could easily fulfill someone like Kevin's life. But why should he get to have happiness at such a vulnerable age while I sit here rotting in place?

The girls at Oakmont High didn't even give me a second glance. In fact it appeared as if the girls attending here had discussed in great detail privately about why to avoid me. Perhaps I didn't fit in, or perhaps I stood out in a specific way that made me oh so easy to hate. Whatever it is, I didn't feel bad about stirring the pot a little bit whenever possible. They didn't give a single fuck about me, so why did I have to give a single *fuck* about them? As far as I was concerned this was my playground. I have no intention of graduating from this institution either, as soon as I'm old enough to live on my own I'll be pursuing my *real* dream of getting an education for programming. I have always wanted to program my own first person shooter games, though I'm always distracted by the pathetic superficial drama of other people.

"Ethan once again you aren't paying attention to the board!" Mrs. Fargo mistakenly stated from across the room.

She had disrupted my thought process once more, a grave mistake for anyone in my vicinity. A wave of complete rage and fury washed over me as I almost instinctively rose from my chair and scrambled vulgarities at Mrs. Fargo.

"For the last fucking time I don't fucking care!" I screamed violently.

Mrs. Fargo was stunned, and the rosy color's that seconds ago had dominated her cheeks were replaced with a ghostly white hue. She was frozen like a deer in headlights. The entire classroom was anxious and staring at me in complete silence. I tried to sit back down as if nothing happened though the class was not going back to its normal formation. They continued to stare coldly as I sat there for another few minutes. A campus security guard then walked into the room and I could feel his cold presence lurk behind me.

"Ethan, let's go! You know we don't mess around with that stuff. Keep it cool and follow the rules, alright?" The guard sternly said. I could sense his ***fear***.

I got out of my chair and reluctantly followed him until we both left the classroom. We walked aggressively and silently to the principal's office which was on the other side of the school by the library. As we approached the principal's office a police officer rushed out of the room and bolted past us, giving me a disgusted glare. A glare that made me feel like he had seen me before, but couldn't remember exactly where. I was escorted into the office and sat onto a leather chair facing Principal Cooke. The security guard left the room and shut the door leading into the

office, leaving me and the Principal alone together. I looked down at my shoes nervously as he stared at me with a powerful and dominant glare. I felt utterly powerless in this situation.

"Ethan, I'm fed up with this crap. Fourteen times in two weeks, really? Your behavior is despicable, and it's leaving a trail of trauma across the entire campus. You're smarter than this, damn it!" Principle Cooke said angrily, I could see the tears building up in his eyes. I stared at him intensely with nothing to say.

"I know I'm smarter than this" I begrudgingly muttered in an attempt to appease him and make this situation go away. Doing so was more painful than waxing.

"Your GPA is a solid 4.0, and yet you choose to act like a goddamn fool. Knock it off, or I'll make sure the consequences are something you won't forget." Principal Cooke desperately pleaded with me.

It was a plea I had heard time and time again from the same exact people over the last year. They're always trying to dance around the obvious to make themselves and their institution look better. I swear to god the amount of rage that flows through me every time I'm lectured could power a fat woman's mobility scooter. Principal Cooke gestured for me to leave his office and I did so reluctantly, not wanting to give him the satisfaction of having power over me. I left his office with nothing but pent up rage inside of me. How ***dare*** that cocksucker tell me anything about my life, what did he know about it? Though I could imagine with his eldest daughter going to CSU recently he's been more than stressed about all the frat meat she's dribbling on nightly. It's fine however, ***he'll pay for this somehow.***

As I walked out of the principal's office I realized at that moment that I had two choices for the remainder of the school day. I could either go back to class and hear that worthless twat, Mrs. Fargo lecture me on culinary arts or I could dip and go spend the remainder of my pocket change on fast food or something. As I started to process my next move I noticed my least favorite student in the entire school walk past me, Veronica Max. She was objectively beautiful, the very definition of sexual allure. She sported a stunning tight black graphic tee that perfectly emphasized the roundness of her figure. She had beautiful black flowing hair and some of the prettiest makeup I had ever seen a girl sport. And yet: she *knew* I couldn't have her. She knows damn well what she's doing, she knows I can't touch her: she knows I don't have the confidence to approach someone like her. She knows how starved of intimacy I am, likely being conscious

of every last second she flaunts her immaculate beauty around me to tease me of what I couldn't have. I ***hated*** her, I wanted her dead.

As she walked past me, her equally braindead boyfriend Billy Kuschner noticed me staring at his goddess of a girlfriend and looked annoyed.

"Oh this creep, hey school shooter what's up?!" Billy said with a condescending smile on his face as his toolbag girlfriend giggled in approval. I could have vomited at the embarrassing predictability of his line. I said nothing as the two of them walked past me casually to leave the building.

Oddly enough, Billy's words never hurt me. In fact I always found his "challenge" of my authority welcoming and fun. He was like a never ending revolving door of easy challenges created solely to boost my own ego. *I've almost developed an arousal response to his presence.* I started to walk back to the classroom to grab my backpack so I could get out of this shithole and get something to eat. However upon doing so, I realized that entering the classroom would present a significant challenge in leaving without having to explain myself. I started to notice security guards lurking in the area so I quickly made my move by entering the classroom and rushing to my table.

Mrs. Fargo was in the middle of a lecture about blueberries and how to moisten them by using flour when baking, but the lecture didn't seem real. It seemed like a last second stage performance. I grabbed my backpack and started to leave before Mrs. Fargo nervously questioned where I was going, ***which I believe she's required to do legally.***

"Oh um, I was sent home for the day for my behavior earlier. Sorry about all of that." I uttered nervously, though I wasn't actually nervous. Mrs. Fargo was taken aback.

"Ah, well, you see, darling, I hope you'll take this as a valuable lesson and decide to be a bit more involved in class. I mean, it's not too much to ask, is it? We all want a pleasant learning environment, after all. So, let's aim for better next time, shall we? I believe in your ability to improve, my dear, your grades are excellent" Mrs. Fargo stated in a very anxious and cold way, I even noticed her swallowing nervously afterwards. The rest of the class were just as uncomfortable and shaken as they were minutes beforehand.

"Right, well I gotta go my dad's waiting for me outside to pick me up. *He's really pissed*" I said in a condescending tone of voice as I truly couldn't help myself. I could hear a handful of students chuckle quietly in response all throughout the classroom. Though Mrs. Fargo was anything but amused by my demeanor, she remained in a defensive posture and nodded her head slowly as to shoo me away.

I left the classroom and started to walk down the hallway, though upon glancing behind me I noticed from the small window leading into the classroom that the class was not directing its attention at the teacher: it was directing its attention to me walking away. I could see several students turning their heads away quickly from my gaze as I stared back. I felt nothing about this and was already moving on in my head as to what I wanted to eat for lunch. As I started walking down the hallway I noticed several security guards casually walking around the area; on the prowl for students like me who were attempting to ditch class. I was already a hot target for my previous infractions today, so this was not a welcome sight. I decided I had no choice but to attempt to bolt past them, hoping no confrontation came of it. My endeavor was ultimately unsuccessful when I heard the same security guard from earlier scream at me from behind.

“Hey! Where do you think you’re going?! Show me your hall pass now!” The young security guard angrily shouted at me from behind. This was one of the major downsides to going to a troubled kids school.

I immediately bolted down the hallway until I was at the exit, before I then ran as fast and hard as I could into the “wilderness”. I liked to call the parking lot of the senior home near the campus the wilderness as it represented the point where the school security guards no longer have authority. I bolted all the way there without opening my eyes as I could hear the security guard behind me struggle to keep up. After running aimlessly into the parking lot of the senior home I eventually ran out of breath. I expected to turn around and get escorted back into the school, however upon turning around I noticed that I had successfully escaped the guard’s grasp. A wave of relief and pride hit me as I realized the weight of what I had just accomplished. I quickly picked myself back up and carried on towards the local grocery store, which had a fantastic deli I frequented for its buffalo wings. As I walked down the sidewalk to the grocery store I started to think of mod ideas for my favorite video game; Doom.

A lot of the kids in my class played lame and superficial games that I didn’t much care for. For example the big thing right now is this “Oblivion” game they won’t stop blabbering about. I had much more refined tastes, I enjoyed games that showcased the brutality of real life on display for my amusement. Doom is one such game. Not only is it completely customizable to my own liking and entirely controllable to my heart's demand, it has a certain oomph factor to it that gives it replayability. The way the monster’s scream and fall to the ground as I pump them full of lead feels so hearty and ***real.*** It’s almost delicious, I spend a large majority of my day playing it. I was supposed to get a job last summer at my local burger joint but neglected basically everything to indulge in my Doom addiction. Neglect is a highly common theme in my life when it comes to organization.

As I continued to talk to myself in my head a car at the crosswalk I'm walking through honked its horn at me, I wasn't supposed to cross yet it appeared. Still, a violent rage swept over me as my thought process was yet again interrupted by the parasitic noises around me. I immediately swung my fist in a very impulsive fashion in the center of the driver's hood as hard as I could.

"Fuck you!" I screamed at the top of my lungs at this driver. Though this would prove to be a big mistake I'd instantly regret, as the driver got out of the vehicle and was revealed to be one of the school security guards. Suddenly I went from feeling all mighty, to utterly powerless and pathetic. I started to bolt once again though this time I could hear the guard's vehicle behind me slowly chasing me to track my location.
A wave of anxiety washed over me as I came to realize that perhaps the senior home parking lot really wasn't an end all be all for escaping, and that consequences can follow outside the school as well.

I ran into the grocery store and within a few minutes of being there stopped worrying about the guard as he had given up his pathetic pursuit. A ***large*** wave of pride and joy washed over me when I discovered that this was the case.

I decided to celebrate the occasion by engaging in some minor shoplifting. Which was an intense deviation from my original plan of buying deli food. I guess you could say an urge shot through me that overpowered my original desire. I started grabbing various items off of the shelf that were small and compact and shoved them into my pocket. I knew the camera's were likely watching every last move I made, but I felt confident enough in my ability to deescalate the situation if it *were* to escalate that I wasn't much concerned. I liked simple salty snacks that gave my taste buds a little, punch I suppose? Beef jerky sticks, crackers with cheese, the really unhealthy shit that'll get your heart pounding. I actually can afford these things with my allowance but I'm saving every penny for college. As I went to leave the building I noticed several police officers arresting a shoplifter, who was maybe only a year older then me and definitely attended my school. This threw me off quite heavily and caused me to reconsider my path. I chose to walk into the men's bathroom instead and quickly ran into a stall and shut the door. I crouched atop the toilet and started undoing the things from my pockets, before shoving said food items into my mouth ferociously. I felt like a wild vicious animal, shoving these food items into my mouth as the man beside my stall took a ***very*** disgusting and intolerable shit. I nearly vomited as a result, though I found a perverse pleasure in forcing myself to sit through it and continue chewing my stolen goods. After a few minutes of doing this the man left his stall and the vile stench subsided quickly after. I continued to pull food items out of my pocket and shove them into my mouth as if I only had minutes left to live. It was a small victory for my ego to have been able to pull this off but I particularly enjoyed the rush of so much sodium entering my veins at once. It gave me a euphoric feeling as if I had just drank an energy drink.

However my parade would soon come to an end as I heard very authoritative footsteps enter the bathroom. With a set of handcuffs jingling with every footstep, and a loud aggressive radio shouting what sounded like nonsense accompanying it. As I looked down into my lap I saw just how many snack items I had stolen, I easily would have racked up a bill of 40 or more dollars had I purchased this. Suddenly I heard a disturbing transmission from the officers radio.

"10-4, Officer Wesson. Repeat shoplifter on-site, possibly in a closet or bathroom. Suspect is male, short, blue hoodie, worn sneakers, approximately 13 or 14 years old. Surveillance is ready to confront. Use caution. Over"

"Copy, I'm en route: over" The officer stated confidently.

Suddenly a rush of fear came over me. Once again I went from feeling incredible to entirely powerless within a few seconds. I heard the officer exit the bathroom and I began to quickly start bundling up all of my wrappers before then shoving them down the toilet bowl. However upon doing so, the toilet bowl started to clog, and then overflow. I started to seriously panic before deciding to just open the stall door and rush out of the bathroom. I still had my backpack on, which made me a highly suspicious target, especially considering the pink color of my backpack which stood out against my blue hoodie. Though to my complete surprise, as I walked to the exit of the building, nobody was attempting to stop me and no police officers were present. Once again, a large wave of pride came over me as I fled the building.

I was planning on camping out at the grocery store for the remainder of the school day, but I then remembered that it was a Tuesday and my parents were both at work at this time of day. Meaning I could easily sneak home and enjoy the rest of my day authentically, rather than listen to the verbal equivalent of cancer by going back to that shithole I called school. I started making my way home which was only a few blocks away from where I currently was. The weather was really unpleasant today, it was humid and hot, and there wasn't an inch of shade in sight. My throat was dry and coarse as a result, which is one of my biggest pet peeves.

After a few more minutes of walking, I finally managed to get home. I reached underneath the door-mat and pulled out the spare house key before entering my family's abode. We had a relatively nice home, it was a large aqua blue family home amidst a suburban sprawl. I walked to the bathroom, urinated and then made my way downstairs to the basement where all my computer equipment was.

I tossed my backpack on the cement floor and plopped down onto my used and worn down computer chair. I felt a wave of glee and even freedom wash over me as I pressed the power button on my Windows XP Dell computer. After the dull and outdated looking "WINDOWS XP" screen had passed, I immediately clicked on my Steam application and waited for a few

minutes for it to update and sign me in. I was highly eager for the next copy of Windows to come out, Windows Vista: as it has a new feature that would allow me the ability to use USB drives for more memory and cache. Meaning more mods could be utilized in games like Wolfenstein and Doom without constant crashing. However as I was monologuing in my head my thought process was interrupted by a familiar sound. The house phone in the kitchen was alerting the household to a new voicemail. I instantly knew what this was about. Usually I'm upset about my thought process being interrupted, though sometimes that's a very useful thing to happen. This was one of those exceptions.

I quickly ran upstairs into the kitchen and pressed play on the voicemails.

"Hello, this is Jessica from the Oakmont High School administration office. Am I speaking with the mother of Ethan Wright? I wanted to discuss some concerns regarding your son. We have received several complaints from various students and staff members about some unusual and concerning behaviors he has been displaying at school. I want to emphasize that we believe Ethan is a good student, a great student even. But it seems he may be acting out lately. We would like to address these issues and work together to support Ethan. Could you please get back to me as soon as possible? Thank you."

I immediately pressed delete on the message, and luckily I knew for a fact that the school didn't have my parents mobile numbers because they both just received new Blackberries as a bonus from their new carrier. Though there was still one loose end that was bugging me, their emails. They may very well have received some kind of email alerting them of my behavior.

I quickly started searching my parents unattended bedroom for any hints of a laptop I could access. However after at least 15 minutes of ransacking the entire room I couldn't find anything. A lightbulb then went off in my head. It dawned on me that the only email contact they'd have is my dad's, as that's what they registered at the 9th grade orientation earlier this year. And I happened to know *exactly where my father's laptop was*.

I ran all the way downstairs and walked into my dad's miniature office located right next to the kitchen. He had transformed a walk in pantry into a fully air conditioned office for himself, which I actually found quite cool. My father was a fucking **loser** but there were definitely times where I found myself admiring him. Upon walking into his "office" I grabbed his laptop off of his compact desk and put it on the kitchen counter. I then opened it and typed in his password which was simply "qwerty". My father was not a very smart man and was very easy to manipulate. To my complete lack of surprise, he had received an email several minutes ago detailing my behavior. I didn't even bother to look at it, I simply deleted it and then ran a cleaning program on his computer to mask any trace of my activity. I put his laptop back and started to run back downstairs. However, immediately after opening the basement door I heard

my least favorite noise in the entire world: the sound of my father coming home from work. I *definitely* lucked out by doing what I did with my time when I had it.

I decided to just face the music and go greet the pathetic pile of waste. As I ran back upstairs to the living room area my dad, Peter, quickly caught sight of me. He looked absolutely exhausted and borderline psychotic with how happy he was attempting to appear. He was dressed very nicely, though you could see the wear and tear on his clothes from whatever menial task he had been doing all day.

“Oh hey there! How was your day?” My father asked in a very detached manner. It didn’t feel like he was in touch with any of our lives. He had absolutely no idea of the spree I went on today, he couldn’t even comprehend the magnitude of what I do on a daily basis. And yet he has the audacity to casually ask me questions like these?

“It was pretty good actually, I got an A in culinary arts as a matter of fact” I said proudly, I said it so convincingly a wave of excitement washed over me as I actually somewhat believed what I had just said.

“Damn! That’s good to hear! Keep up the good work.” My father said in a very forced way. It felt like I was watching a puppet on strings dance for me.

“You know I’m starved, how about we get a bite to eat? Get some pizza maybe? Your moms not gonna be home for hours” My father suggested aggressively. I felt obligated to go with him, even though I wasn’t very hungry. I wanted to play Doom. However I also wanted to keep the peace tonight, so I obliged his request.

“Alright go get your phone if you have it just in case, I’ll be out front” My father said assertively as he then took an incoming phone call. I walked downstairs to the basement, put my shoes on and grabbed my backpack and plopped it onto my chair. I unzipped the backpack to grab my phone which was a Motorola RAZR from 2001. I fucking hated it with a passion. Using it was like performing advanced calculus. Though upon unzipping the bag a wretched stench emitted from it. ***Then I remembered another extra curricular activity I had partaken in.***

Inside the center console of my backpack were several dead birds, all tortured to death in various ways. Some had their eyeballs sliced out with an X-acto knife, some strangled and suffocated and some stomped on and smashed. I must have done this weeks ago and forgot. I tossed my backpack aside and ran back upstairs with my phone in my pocket to go get pizza with my father. I walked out the front door and sure enough he was in his 2003 Ford Fusion arguing with some loser in charge of him over the phone. I figured the phone call would end eventually –it *did*

not–the entire car ride to Rocky Mountain: Pies and Slices was filled with nothing but contempt and failure at the hands of my father. Though he did end the call as we drove into the parking lot.

“Sorry about that, let's get our grub on!” My father said in an upbeat manner. I smiled and let out an awkward laugh, however his line was infuriating and pitiful enough to inspire serious rage. We both awkwardly walked into the restaurant and sat down at a table. A very attractive young woman came out to serve the both of us and take our orders. I clearly wasn’t the only one who found her attractive, as my father stares intensely at her waist the entire time. I was staring at her breasts however, which I found far more *useful.*

The waitress brought us our water glasses, and my father took a large gulp out of his before looking at me with a serious expression.

“So, tell me about your day today” He said, it almost appeared as if he was forcing himself to care about me for just 5 minutes of the day so he could tell himself he’s a good parent. Though I saw through his measly attempt at a facade, all I saw was a quivering dying middle aged man with plenty of skeletons in his closet. I started to respond to him, however couldn’t focus on anything except for that hot number serving us our food. I wanted to put duct tape over her mouth to cover her screaming while I sodomized her with a kitchen knife.

“Earth to Ethan” my father jokingly muttered as he waved his hand in front of my face. I felt insulted that he’d try to dominate me like that.

“I don’t really wanna talk about it” I angrily muttered in response while sitting in my chair with my arms crossed.

“Do you know how to speak English? You sound like a scared fucking cat” My father said jokingly. I didn’t find it very funny. As a matter of fact I felt nothing but rage in that moment, but masked it with a contempt filled grin.

CHAPTER 2:

Keeping the peace

I could only take so much of my father's detached and polite temperament before starting to see red. Not just because he's an annoying pile of shit who I'm positive will kill himself soon, but because of my constant flashbacks to my earlier behavior. My vibe did not fit his, I was tense as nails. I'm not usually like this but I definitely was starting to become worried about the possible consequences of earlier today. I most definitely was going to get confronted by Principal Cooke if not even expelled. Which would ultimately reduce my ability to have fun for at least a week due to my parents punishment's. I decided to use the opportunity in front of me to win over my father for the time being as to possibly dull future punishments.

“I love this place,” I said confidently. I absolutely couldn’t *stand* this place. My dad was slobbering on a slice of Prosciutto and Fig Pizza, which was his absolute favorite. It looked as if a woman had given birth to a stillborn baby on a pie crust after a long night of drinking Everclear and it was stuck in the oven.

"I knew you would love it! You have great taste, just like me." My dad snarled arrogantly. I nauseatingly shook my head in agreement to appease him. I could see the validation lighting his eyes up like a fire. Suddenly my pizza was brought out, a simple cheese pizza with nothing on it and a flat crust. It was small as if it were for a child.

“That’s a pretty plain pizza you got there” My dad commented in an insecure fashion.

“Yeah I don’t like much on mine” I muttered quietly. Thinking more about tomorrow’s consequences than anything else.

“So are you dating any girls right now?” My dad asked in a desperate and obnoxious bid to pry into my personal life. I became increasingly enraged with this.

“Uh no not really I’m just focusing on school, *dad*” I said in a nervous tone, once again mumbling due to my own discomfort.

“Oh that’s not a big deal, you’ll find someone eventually” My father smugly stated while taking a bite of his disgusting looking pizza. His attempt at reassurance did anything but reassure me, it simply reassured me that I hated him as much as I thought I did. *If only he knew.* I decided to try and change the subject to something that may cheer me up a bit more.

“I did have this cool experience recently with my friend online playing DOOM” I said with genuine interest.

“Oh yeah?” My father said in an uninterested and antagonistic fashion while texting somebody on his Blackberry. I completely felt any and all enthusiasm fade from my body completely in that moment as I was once again plunged into the reality of my situation. It made me plunge my head down on the table in complete defeat and anguish, I was far from hungry at this point. My father didn’t even notice or care about my immature action, and focused solely on texting whoever was on the receiving end of his Blackberry. I have long suspected my father has been having sex with random women on Ashley Madison, considering my mom is hardly ever home. Even when she is home, she is far from romantic. It was one of the few abuses of me I could truly empathize with my father about.

After another ten minutes of silence and texting, my father announced it was time to go back home. We got into his car and drove back home in complete silence. I felt a sigh of relief as we finally pulled back into our garage, however that relief quickly became fury and anxiety as my father stopped me from getting out of the car to lecture me.

"Hey by the way today, I need you to vacuum all of the stairs in the house. They are filthy, and honestly I'm getting really sick of you just blowing it off so you can go play" My father lectured in an angry and malicious fashion. It felt as if even if I had vacuumed the stairs perfectly, there would still be an issue resulting in me being insulted. The fact I was prevented from leaving the vehicle to listen to his worthless rant infuriated me further. Though I played it cool and walked upstairs to the kitchen to get myself a glass of water, as the stressful situation earlier had left me dehydrated and weak.

Though even upon going upstairs I still was not free from the ear grating ranting of my father. I could hear his pathetic voice echo from downstairs as it called out to me to perform another meaningless task.

"Ethan? Ethan!" My father yelled from downstairs. I felt nothing but rage and fury wash over me as he once more demanded my attention.

"What?!" I gave in and screamed.

"Really? You wanna scream at me? Wanna be grounded for the weekend?" My father pathetically croaked. He acted as if he didn't understand why I could possibly be frustrated with him.

"For what? I'm going to do everything you *fucking* asked!" I yelled in frustration, holding back the reality of how I felt. I expected to get grounded for the swear, however my father simply stormed up the basement stairs and childishly stomped up to his room before slamming the door. I felt confused and anxious as I stood in the living room of our dimly lit home that was hardly lived in by anyone but me. At this point I was finally able to play Doom, but the energy I previously had for playing games had been replaced with an anxious edge. I needed to do something to feel powerful before I passed out due to my complete exhaustion and lack of energy.

I walked out to our driveway, which was usually reserved for my mother and took several deep breaths. For once I finally felt a sense of peace today as I could breathe without someone breathing down my neck. I noticed a crow in that moment chewing on a piece of garbage to my right, just outside of our garage.

It was large, at least the size of both of my fists pressed together. It had a lot of gray hairs presumably due to older age, and had a lot of coarse hairs that were noticeable from very far away. It seemed to be delighted as it gnawed away endlessly at a rotten apple that had been sitting in our driveway for weeks due to my father's complete laziness. As it chewed away in delight, I decided to then take one of the medium sized stones lining our fountain and chuck it as hard as I could at the crow's perfectly round bulbous head.

The crow immediately gave in to the impact of the stone after making a hideous screeching sound. It was ragdolled onto it's left side as the stone ricocheted off of the concrete driveway. The crow did not completely stop moving, as it's wings and nervous system still twitched after the impact. I felt a tinge of remorse about what I had just done in the heat of the moment as I walked up to it's body. Though that tinge of remorse was replaced with a deeply sadistic pleasure as I noticed the crow was still alive and breathing. I picked it up carefully as I didn't want to ruin my fun and kill it already, and took it to my backyard which was completely unmaintained and ripe for degeneracy.

I was holding it by its wings as I carefully walked through my house to enter the backyard, being very careful as to not send it into a shock state that killed it. I wanted to have *fun.* I set the bird down on the cold marble kitchen counter and grabbed a small serrated kitchen knife from the silverware drawer. The crow withered in pain as if it expected some type of mercy. Upon grabbing my knife I noticed a small piece of Tupperware that was ironically about the same size as the crows' entire body. My mind suddenly lit up with ideas. I filled the container with Hawaiian sea salt and proceeded to take the knife, the crow and the container into the backyard.

I sat everything down on the ground near the shed and sat down in a cross legged position. For the first time all day I felt powerful and as if I was fulfilling my true purpose. I dragged the crow by its wings slowly onto my lap, before laying it on its back. Its eyes were watering, its breathing was shallow, and the small amount of emotion it could even convey was being displayed at full force. Such a fragile *helpless* being. It felt almost hypocritical to have taken so much joy in this, as most days I felt exactly as the crow before me felt. Unheard, powerless, stripped of dignity and rights at the snap of a finger. And yet I couldn't stop myself from picking up my small serrated blade and beginning to peel the crow like a raw potato. Its pathetic blood curdling screams felt almost human as I continued to strip it of its skin alive. It attempted to toss and turn in my lap, however I restricted it from having even the tiniest amount of autonomy. Which was another factor that made me feel… In charge.

After minutes of repeating this action, my hands were completely stained with blood. The blood dried out so quickly onto the skin of my hands it went from being a dark red color to a brownish tint, as if my hands were coated in human feces. At this stage, the crow was still breathing, its level of consciousness was another story. I had managed to completely skin the crow of every

last bit of skin and feathers it had aside from its head, which still had a full coat of skin and fur. It was starting to twitch in agony. *It had no idea what agony was.* I took this pulsating little mass of flesh that was once a crow and quickly tossed it into the little Tupperware of salt. It was almost as if it had been given new life. It started to thrash about like I had never seen anything thrash about in my life. It's mouth dropped in shock as it struggled to absorb the pain it was experiencing.

Suddenly my least favorite sound in the entire world came from behind me. It was my father opening the screen door.

"Hey, I thought I told you to vacuum the stairs? Do you even wanna live here!?" My father screamed at me from behind. I felt every last bit of sadistic energy and joy flood out of me at that very moment. My father loved to drain my energy whenever he sensed I had any. One of his many sadistic games aimed at his own family.

"What are you doing over there in the corner?" He yelled.

"Nothing" I childishly stated as I obscured my little party, and quickly tossed the breathing crows body into a very tiny ditch I had crafted for it.

"Whatever, get your ass in here and don't start your shit with me today unless you want a problem" My father angrily scolded before walking away to do god knows what.

I turned my attention back to the crow I had just stripped of life, as it continued to throb and suffer in the tiny ditch I had dumped it in. I stared intensely into its beady little eyes, before covering it with a small amount of dirt and stomping it down to mold it to the yard. I could see a tiny amount of movement occurring under the small patch of dirt I had buried it under, it was *still breathing. But what was left of it?*

As I walked back into the house my mother suddenly pulled into the driveway before exiting her vehicle. She drove a 2004 Toyota Prius, a vehicle I would never be caught dead driving in my adult years. But I suppose such a vehicle was perfect for a feeble woman like my mother. Similar to father, she was extremely tired and had a worn down appearance. She was wearing a hand me down businesswoman's suit from the local thrift store that she liked to pretend was luxurious. She was a realtor and made sure to let everyone know it. Though she was far from a success story, she did the bare minimum required in order to make a living. I'm not sure how much income my parents made a year as it was always kept secret from me, however I suspected it was in the early 6 figures which was not very good.

"Hey sweetie, how was your day today?" My mother droned on as she tiredly closed the car door behind her. She sounded like a carbon copy of father. I started to think back to what I had just finished doing, and a large smile overtook my face. My mother walked over to me.

"Now that's what I like to see!" She said, pinching my cheeks and referring to my smile before walking into the house. I followed behind her as we both walked into the kitchen. She was being fake, however I still appreciated the attempt at positivity. I didn't experience much positivity generally so it always feels exceedingly good when I receive that small amount from her every now and then.

"So I have to go to a meeting in L.A for a few days and I'll be leaving for my flight tomorrow." My mother stated in a somewhat ashamed tone. I felt quite bad about this considering it would mean more alone time with me and my father in the near future. However it also meant more free time for *extracurricular activities*.

"I put some Lunchables in the fridge for you for tomorrow though!" My mother said in an attempt to cheer me up. Admittedly, it *did*.

"Thanks" I said with genuine intent.

"Of course! I've always had your back haven't I?" Suddenly the small shrapnel of love still alive in my heart died again as I was brought back to reality. My mother proceeded to walk upstairs, likely to go have sex with my father. They did not get along at all in any way other than to have sex every other night. I have many memories of Christmases ruined by rumination over what my parents were doing upstairs when they were screaming profanities at the top of their lungs due to the pleasure from the sex they were having. Even though I really just wanted to play my new Nintendo 64.

Once again I was alone in the living room and decided to head back down to the basement to play some Doom once and for all. Upon walking downstairs I noticed my reflection in the mirror.

I was rather disgusted by it considering how unappealing I must have looked to the opposite sex. I had a nasty stained blue hoodie on, ugly worn down sneakers, and similarly stained black sweatpants on that I had been using on and off for several days without washing. My hair was becoming very unkempt and greasy to the point of it starting to curl. I also smelled bad, like onions. Though I didn't care, I wanted to play video games far more than I wanted to impress anyone with my cleanliness. I walked over to my computer and turned it on before sitting down. After I got past the boot screen, I opened up my copy of Doom with a mod-loader to play a custom level not available in the original game. It was a specific level I enjoyed that placed you front and center in the suburbs, like where I lived. Suddenly I was loaded into the game and I eagerly began playing. I was spawned at the start of the map with the default shotgun, and I began walking down the in-game sidewalk to find people to kill. I absolutely loved the attention to detail present in these types of games. Every last bit of movement in the game felt so authentic and powerful. Every last blast of my shotgun felt like it was truly penetrating the skulls of the inferior few who were unlucky enough to cross me.

I was having so much fun I almost couldn't help myself but to giggle every time I killed an enemy. Time seemed to stand still when I engaged in this activity, it was something I could truly be happy doing for the rest of my life. However every 5 minutes or so my immersion would be interrupted by a stupid mut barking its head off outside. Several stupid mutts actually, and they were large ones as I could hear them from several blocks away even in this large and insulated basement. There was an entire street a block down that was just littered with obnoxious and undisciplined dogs for whatever reason. Nearly all of them were unleashed as well as unfixed, not to mention they tended to have behavioral issues. I remember one time an animal control unit had to be called to euthanize one of the pitbulls on that street, due to the fact it had bitten a senior citizen in the area.

As I continued to try and play my game, I kept getting interrupted by the noise of numerous dogs incessantly barking over one another. It was obnoxious and started to seriously make me angry. Fantasies of choking them out until death washed over me. At this point I stopped caring about my game as I couldn't focus on it anymore and I turned my computer off to go to bed. It was only 9:30 PM but I had experienced such a long and exhausting day that I figured it was best to just go to bed now. I got up from my chair and proceeded to walk upstairs to get a glass of water before bed. However upon going upstairs, I saw my father in the kitchen laying his head down pathetically on the marble kitchen table that was centerfold of the kitchen. He was holding a bottle of Gin that was clearly ¼ depleted.

I figured he was in a sedated state so I could easily sneak past him, though upon making my way up the stairs the worst case scenario occurred.

"Ethan" My father pathetically croaked. This obviously meant I couldn't finish walking upstairs, so in a resentful way I walked over to him. Making sure to showcase my frustration every step of the way, as to hopefully deter him from doing this again, even though that was *never* going to happen.

"You know I love you, right?" My father said in a defeated and desperate tone. Even though he seemed genuine in his intention to express this to me, it still felt gross and pathetic considering the multitude of negative interactions we had on the daily. Not to mention it also made me feel ***very*** guilty for any retaliation I threw back at him. But not in a genuine way, in a very forced and obnoxious way that I didn't consent to feeling.

"I love you too, dad" I was hardly able to say it with a straight face.

I walked back up to my room, which was plastered with posters of various rock acts I enjoyed, and shut the door behind me. I didn't have much in my room other than a few decorative items, my mattress which was unmade and on the floor, and a really shitty laptop from the 90's that I only used for school work and to check Myspace. Suddenly I got the idea to check my Myspace page before I went to bed, as I wasn't entirely ready to sleep yet. Neglecting to brush my teeth, I took my clothes off save for my underwear and got into my bed with my laptop on my side. My sheets had a vile stench emitting from them likely from the last few months of me sweating onto them without washing them. I didn't feel a need to as I didn't mind the stench of my own body.

As I opened my Windows 95 Dell laptop, I couldn't help but feel *extremely* angry at the fact my father had attempted to manipulate me downstairs a moment ago. Though I didn't want to direct that anger towards my father considering the fact I likely still had to deal with him for a few more years and there was nothing I could do until then. So I started to flip through potential scapegoats in my head. I knew it was wrong, I knew what I was doing would likely backfire in the near future but at this stage in my life, I didn't care anymore about the consequences. I didn't care about anything but whatever would bring me momentary relief from reality.

As I opened Myspace and logged in to my account, I was immediately greeted with a mutual friend suggestion for Veronica Max. I felt an immediate sense of relief once I realized Veronica shared a class with me tomorrow in social studies. I could use this as an opportunity to feel something other than powerless. I immediately clicked on her page and saw exactly what I would have expected to see. Pictures of her engaging in degeneracy her parents obviously didn't allow, pictures of her hanging out with significantly older boys. And of course, her profile was studded with pictures and mentions of Panic! At The Disco among other absolutely spineless gutless bullshit. It was almost as if she made pages like these just to taunt all of us that we can't be her. That we can't *feel* inside of her. A part of me was increasingly furious with her misbehavior, though another part of me was happy I had found something to focus all of my time on. I was so

happy as a matter of fact, I started giggling out loud. Which was a habit I desperately tried to subdue. But I *couldn't* stop.

I logged out of Myspace and turned my computer off before placing it aside my mattress and laying on my side and turning off my light which was on my dresser next to me. The entire night of attempting to sleep I was met with failure. I couldn't stop gleefully thinking about my day with Veronica, and how much fun we would be having together.

As soon as I woke from my deep sleep at around 6 AM, I could feel an aura of importance in the air. Today was an important day, one that I had been waiting for my entire life. The day I was finally going to start expressing myself in healthier ways. Ways that would actually connect me to my higher purpose. I felt completely empowered as I got out of bed and went downstairs into the kitchen to get myself some breakfast. When I opened the fridge I noticed the Ham & Cheese Lunchables my mother bought for me the night before. It may have been breakfast but I likely wasn't going to have time to even eat lunch after today, so I chose that as my breakfast. As I ate my cheap and unfulfilling meal, I couldn't help but feel like it symbolized the beginning of the end. As silly as that may sound considering it was just a Lunchable, my mind was subconsciously memorializing every last shrapnel of normalcy I had left. After today, there was potentially no going back. I didn't know exactly what I was going to do, but I knew for a fact I was going to fly closer to the sun than I had previously with what I did today. Suddenly my mom came downstairs.

"Oh hey sweetie I presume you're getting ready for school." She said cheerfully.

"Yeah, just woke up a few minutes ago" I said, feeling genuinely good and somewhat in power for once.

"Oh sweetie that was for lunch" My mom said in a very harsh critical tone, she was referring to the Lunchable that I had just consumed. I felt annoyed that she was infantilizing me like this, considering I'm pretty sure I can decide when I eat what.

"Oh yeah well I just figured it'd be better for breakfast" I said, feeling intimidated by my mother.

My mother sighed, which sucked all energy out from under me in an instant. I felt horrible and had a sinking sensation in my stomach.

"Ok I guess I won't get you those anymore, you need to start listening or I'm gonna get your head checked" She said in a very judgemental and aggressive tone. Somehow she had made me feel like an atrocious person over a lunchable. It always infuriated me when she overlooked the true problems in my life to place blame on things like this. It made no sense and did nothing but

fuel my insatiable lust for violence. She walked away aggressively out the front door after grabbing a cola from the fridge alongside her purse which was sitting on the kitchen counter.

“Have a nice day today sweetie” My mother stated before closing the door behind her and locking it. She had absolutely no idea what today had in store for me. I went back upstairs to take a quick shower and put my day clothes on. After doing so I brushed my teeth for the first time in what must have been days. I then threw on my usual blue hoodie, and finished getting dressed before heading downstairs to grab my backpack. Upon going downstairs however I noticed a Hammer on table of my dad’s basement workshop. My dad frequently purchased carpentry equipment to look good to mom, but I hardly ever saw him use any of it. For whatever reason, I had an urge to take it with me to school today. So I did, I slipped it in my backpack and quickly made my way upstairs and out the front door. The day was chilly, the sun was out but it was far too chilly and windy to have any kind of enjoyable experience. Though I suppose it was fitting considering what today symbolized. The walk to school went by very quickly, as I was deeply entranced in my own thoughts to a point where nothing else really mattered. I was thinking about what kind of carnage I could bring today, how I could get away with it and how I could maintain control over the situation all at once. Upon entering the school, the bell rang, which indicated I was late by several seconds. An infuriating defeat that further highlighted my rage. As I attempted to quickly make my way to class, school security and staff members gave me mean mug’s. It didn’t feel parental, as if they felt I was a rotten kid who needed detention and discipline. It was *personal*, as if they wanted me off the premises. If only they knew what was coming.

Chapter 3: Recess

My first class of the day was English, my least favorite class considering how difficult it was to manipulate the people in it. I felt somewhat anxious having that hammer in my backpack, it was a constant reminder of today's obligations. Today we had to read "To Kill A Mockingbird" which I found dreadfully boring. Luckily my school had *one* good thing going for it, there was a breakfast break after the first period that lasted 20 minutes and it was coming soon. It was instated last year as one of many various "upgrades" meant to convince students not to drop out. This school was a nightmare to navigate on a normal day to day basis. Students as young as me dropped out near weekly due to its declining conditions.

The worst issue by far is the hatred in the air, there's a significant amount of student-teacher tension occurring on a constant basis. The teachers here mostly consist of religious fanatics with complexes about their legacies left on the world. That doesn't merge well with the majority of the population here, consisting mostly of at risk youth and special-education aberrations like myself. Most of the kids here if they didn't want to fuck eachother likely were busy smoking weed or ditching class to go shoplift like I do from time to time. It made life miserable, and class miserable for that matter. None of us were trusted by the staff and were tossed around like a sack of potatoes.

"Ethan! Get your head back up and into the book for the last time!" Mr. Fawn shouted in an aggressive tone, referring to the fact my head was face down on my desk instead of engaging with To Kill A Mockingbird. I didn't argue with Mr. Fawn, He didn't necessarily scare me, but he commanded a certain level of authority and consequence to him that made me not want to make his life difficult. Not to mention he was only in his 20's which made him a lot harder to manipulate.

"Sorry Mr. Fawn" I stated in a tired and defeated tone of voice. I didn't want to waste my energy on him, something he seemed to sense and resent. He walked over to me in an aggressive fashion and stared at me for a few seconds.

"You know what dude I actually don't like you, like at *all*." Mr. Fawn stated loudly.

“You come to class late consistently, you make rude and passive aggressive comments and you also are just plain creepy. You stare at students and make them uncomfortable and I have to hear constant complaints about it, you make threats, you lie about other students. I think you should maybe just leave” Mr. Fawn demanded sternly while shaking his head and clenching his mouth in contempt.

“Really?” I asked in a blase tone.

“Yeah” He said in a very aggressive manner. I could feel the bass from his voice resonate throughout my body.

“I’m sorry, I’ll read the book now for real. You won’t have an issue with me again Mr. Fawn” I desperately pleaded in a very fake manner. Though I could see his face start to believe what I had just said upon hearing it. He stood in front of me for another few seconds in silence as the class looked on.

“Okay, well one more incident and not only are you going to see Principal Cooke you’re getting a call home and possibly suspended. Sound good?” He said in a stern tone of voice, giving me a sliver of mercy I didn’t deserve.“Yes, I’m sorry” I continued to plead. He looked very sketched out.

“Alright, anyways class-” He pressed on. He walked back to his teaching area and continued reading the book and explaining it for the class. I opened my copy of To Kill A Mockingbird and pretended to read it like everyone else was. However inside I was actually in fight or flight mode. I knew what was coming in just a short while and couldn’t contain both my excitement and my fear.

After a short while, the bell rang for breakfast. I grabbed my stuff and made my way to the cafeteria. Every student was granted one free breakfast meal a day, so I went to the serving area of the cafeteria to get my portion. Upon doing so, I saw *Veronica*. This time by herself and unattended by that toolbag Billy. Suddenly the ability to introspect and think became very difficult to achieve, as I was filled in that moment with nothing but envy and rage. She looked better than ever today. Her hair had new colors of highlight in it, showcasing her sexual readiness and promiscuity. She had an absolutely stunning blue dress on that made her look like a runway model from the 1970’s. She truly was someone you just wanted to hold down and duct tape the mouth of. I decided in that moment of seeing her alone, looking ahead of her to see what was for breakfast, to approach her formally. *Perhaps she could unwittingly convince me to spare her life.*

I quietly and nervously approached her, before she turned around and stared at me in a slightly disturbed fashion.

“Hello Veronica,” I said in a calm and friendly manner. Though I could tell by her face she was uncomfortable. She crossed her arms and shifted her weight onto her other leg.

“Hi,” She said in an extremely uncomfortable and slow manner. She instantly returned back to her old stance and cut off open communication to me with her body language. As if I had *never existed.* I walked to the back of the lunch line and started to stew in anger at the lack of recognition I received from Veronica. I felt entirely powerless and useless at that moment. And that was entirely fine, *because Veronica was going to die*.

After waiting in the lunch line for around 5 minutes, I managed to finally make it to the front. The two lunch ladies on duty looked worn down and like grotesque examples of the female gender. They were both elderly, saggy, and generally looked atrocious. The lunch lady to my right stocking milk cartons for everyone to grab even had unshaven facial hair on her chin. The food being served today was nothing to write home about, stale and greasy sausages with a side of microwaved egg that was actually shaped like the small bowl it was microwaved in. I hesitantly took a tray containing this meal and sat down with it. I didn’t intend to eat any of it though it felt nice to have some space to think and blend in.

I ended up sitting in the same spot without moving for 5 whole minutes as my tray remained untouched. I basically stared off into the distance, fantasizing about how this day was going to go. Suddenly a kid that I had seen around the campus several times approached me. He was short, Mexican and wore very old and worn down clothing. He had a gray sweater as well as jeans and two very old sneakers. His teeth were also notable in that they were completely out of shape and corroded. He seemed very interested in wanting to be my friend, for whatever inconceivable reason.

“Hi, my name is Angel. What’s your name?” He said in a very friendly tone. I could see in his eyes he was desperate for companionship, something that made me smile. I felt bad for him.

“Ethan” I said in a hostile and standoffish tone, while not even paying attention to him. My attention was more focused on Veronica, who was standing by the exit of the cafeteria on her phone, likely texting her boyfriend Billy.

“Ethan, that’s a cool name. I just saw you hanging about and wondered what’s up. I don’t think anyone deserves to have to sit alone at lunch” Angel said while scoffing to himself. I saw Veronica leave through the exit and immediately grabbed my bag and followed suit. Angel was left behind and looked really annoyed and disturbed by my lack of engagement.
I started to tail Veronica from a distance, not wanting her to see me following her every move. She had her backpack on which likely meant she was looking to go ditch class and smoke. The

implications of that sent shivers down my spine as I knew it was *finally* my time. I followed her a long way, all the way down the heavily populated hallway. I was very worried at first that she was going to go back to class or decide to actually hang out on campus, however I was both delighted and anxious to see her continue to walk down the hallway all the way to the building's exit. Once she walked out the exit I made sure to quickly follow pursuit. Luckily nobody stopped either of us, and no security guards were nearby.

She started going down the sidewalk, She was going in a direction I wasn't quite familiar with, as I usually never had any need to go over here. We eventually had gone so far past the school we had come to a rustic old bus-stop at least a mile away from the school. She then went behind the bus-stop and through an alley-way that I had never seen before. It was an alleyway created between two deteriorating brick walls. I had realized at that moment that this was a desolate enough area to go for the **kill.** She started to walk slower than before as she was texting somebody, likely to meet up with them and smoke. The mere existence of her having a friend to share such experiences with stirred a blend of envy and anger within me. I quietly unzipped my backpack and pulled out my father's hammer as Veronica stood still. I creeped behind Veronica inch by inch slowly, until I was *finally* behind her enough to swing my hammer down full force at the center of her skull. After doing so she immediately collapsed onto the ground face first without any physical resistance. I quickly rolled her over on her back so that I could have access to her face. She managed to gather a fragment of consciousness at this moment and tried to push me away with her left hand. Though her attempt to stop me was futile as I moved her left hand out of the way and quickly swung my hammer into her left eyeball, causing it to burst.

As it burst, she let out one final blood-curdling scream that echoed throughout the alley way, before seemingly ceasing consciousness. Upon seeing her lifeless body, a shockwave of shame and self hatred washed over me, making me even angrier. I continued swinging my hammer down at Veronica's head, smashing it into her forehead at least 4-5 times before calling it quits and running away from the scene. That had gone significantly smoother than I ever could have dreamed. Though as I looked behind me while running I could see a large puddle start to collect underneath Veronica's body, which filled the air with a strange metallic smell. As I started to run away I noticed that I wasn't so clean myself, as I had unknowingly stained my hoodie with Veronica's bodily fluids. A fact that filled me with *both* pride and self hatred at the same time. Unfortunately, as I was running down the sidewalk to go home and ditch the rest of the school day, a vehicle with 4 occupants drove past me and saw me covered in strange fluids and holding a weapon. I had played my luck a little too hard by doing all of this so openly, and needed to find a way to shed this evidence. The vehicle went a tad bit slower when passing me, likely to get a closer look at me, however sped off as soon as I stared back at them. I *really* hoped those weren't students. I quickly ran down the sidewalk where I had come from until I managed to come across a lone porta potty that was by a water fountain for bicyclists. Once inside I locked the door and quickly took my jacket off before stuffing it inside of my backpack, leaving me with just a white

t-shirt on. I was about to simply slip the hammer into my bag and leave, however I realized I had a golden opportunity to dispose of something else I had been meaning to get rid of. I sat the hammer down on the floor and started grabbing small handfuls of animal parts from my backpack and tossing them into the pit of human waste before me. I watched them lifelessly fall into the pit of human fecal matter below and then slipped the hammer back into the bag before zipping it up and leaving. Luckily, nobody seemed to have discovered Veronica yet with there not being any sirens nearby. Even though it had only been minutes since I had committed the act, I was extremely paranoid already.

I contemplated whether I should go back to class or go home for the rest of the night to have a good alibi for what I had just done. I had never done something of this magnitude before in my life and had no clue how to navigate it, which is something I should have considered before doing it. Unfortunately my excitement was too much to restrain this time. I decided to go back home as it was closer at this point than the school was. Plus it would likely be more suspicious if I *did* show up to class with my track record. Upon finally getting home I immediately went for a large glass of water, as at this point I was extremely dehydrated. My mind was racing with possibilities and outcomes, and of all nights tonight was going to be one of the most difficult to survive. However I did know I had a few hours before father came home, and with that I also realized mother was on her trip, *with her Prius fob unattended.*

A wave of excitement rushed over me as I grabbed the fob and ran outside to the driveway. I quickly unlocked mother's 2004 Toyota Prius and got inside before shutting the door and buckling my seatbelt. I was a little too short to drive it comfortably, and I had never driven a car before. However I realized that if I were to be caught for my actions it was unlikely I would ever get to experience this in my lifetime, *so what left did I have to lose?*

With the fob in my pocket, I hit the break's pedal before pressing the ignition button down for several seconds and starting the car. A slight chill went down my spine as I considered the implications of getting caught for this, though it was also very cold in the vehicle. I pressed the tiny gear shift into reverse and pressed the accelerator, there was a minor delay between me pressing it down and the car actually moving, which freaked me out and disoriented me a bit. I backed out of the driveway and hesitantly pulled the car into drive, the vehicle once again delaying as I pressed the accelerator. My driving skills were sketchy at best, I constantly veered slightly out of my lane and couldn't maintain a proper speed limit. I also found it difficult to see what I was doing properly as I didn't know how to adjust the seats. I was very anxious about performing this action.

As I drove down the street I contemplated all sorts of possibilities. I decided on attempting to go back to the scene of my earlier activities, however upon making my way to the stop sign of the intersection, several police cars with their sirens blaring sped past me. An Ambulance also

followed pursuit, which could only mean one thing. I decided to turn right, tailing the law enforcement vehicles from a distance. Though I was doing a very bad job of it and had serious difficulty maintaining stability of the vehicle. I had never operated a steering wheel outside of video game controllers, and had no idea how sensitive they were to minor movements until now.I kept veering out of my lane, while struggling to maintain the speed limit. I slowly and cautiously made my way to the stop sign for a busy intersection leading to the school. I then hit the breaks and came to a halt at the stop sign, feeling like I was not prepared to do what I was about to do. I could see passerby's glancing into the vehicle every few seconds, likely scoffing at how I'm too young to be driving. I was starting to regret my actions minorly, though once it was clear for me to turn I sloppily turned the steering wheel to go right and started going down the road. An unbelievably powerful burst of anxiety shot down my stomach in a way I had never experienced before. I felt as if this was the climax of my entire life, the life or death moment that could change everything for me.

I realized what a dumb and scatterbrained idea it was to follow law enforcement vehicles without a license while looking all of 12 years old. However I kept going as I felt they had a far bigger priority to worry about. To my complete shock and surprise, after a few minutes of following them down the neighborhood road they pulled to the side, and quickly got out of their vehicles and rushed into a large blue house I wasn't familiar with in the area. I hit the accelerator and drove around them, before going another block down the same road, attempting not to arouse any unwanted attention. I couldn't believe that there wasn't a bigger scene surrounding what had happened to Veronica already, she still somehow must not have been discovered. The sounds of sirens eventually faded into the distance behind me, and after driving down the road for a minute I saw one of the dozen or so dogs that bark annoyingly around the neighborhood merrily walk out in front of the road as I drove down it. A devious smile overtook my face, as I hit the accelerator as hard as I could and started barrelling down the road directly toward the elderly mutt. Upon impact my face was thrust forward into the steering wheel, feeling like a man had just struck me in the head with his fist. The dog was thrust under the vehicle, and the prius struggled to get its front tires over it. A small splatter of blood and other bodily fluid painted the windshield. The entire time I was attempting to force the front tires over the dog's large body it was screaming loudly in agonizing pain, the loud noises sent more shockwaves of anxiety down my spine as I threw the prius into reverse to gain more leverage over the dog. Upon backing up I was horrified to see one of the male homeowner's attempting desperately to open the driver side door, with them fortunately failing as the door was locked. I had never felt more alive as I could see the door handle from the inside refusing to give into his attempts to open the door. The man attempting to open the car door was thrust forward and nearly fell over as I threw the car into drive and practically bulldozed over the dog's bludgeoned body as I managed to get away.

"You're going to prison fuck-face!" The man behind me could be heard yelling as I sped away into the distance. A wave of pride and glee washed over me as I realized how dangerous that

was, and how effortlessly I managed to get away. Though that feeling of glee was quickly replaced with dread and regret, as I knew that now it was time to go home and face father in less than an hour or two.

At this point, nearly all energy and momentum had been sucked out of my body. I was dreadfully exhausted, and still incredibly anxious and nauseous from what I had just done. I sluggishly drove back to my house which was only a block away, and drove into the driveway. Upon getting out and sneaking back into the house, I had realized how unwell I was from today's activities. I was shaking from fear as well as adrenaline. I couldn't believe what I was able to accomplish in just one day, though the physical exertion from all of it was catching up to me. I likely wouldn't be able to lift anything for a week due to how bruised up I'd be. It felt like I had only been out for less than 15 minutes, though upon looking at the clock I had realized that I was out for at least an hour and a half. I must have spent a lot of time daydreaming and driving around without realizing it due to my distressed state of mind, a behavior that was translated from my usual pattern of walking around aimlessly for hours daydreaming. This was very bad news, as it meant I only had about 30 minutes or so until father came home. I needed to shed some more evidence.

I walked back out to the driveway only to make a horrifying realization. The front of the car was covered in thick blood smears, and had several dents on the hood as well as the license plate. I didn't know what to do at this point and only had less than 30 minutes to figure out a solution. I ran inside and grabbed a bottle of dish soap as well as a sponge, and a thick roll of paper-towels. As I sprayed the blood splattered area's I realized that some of the blood was actually starting to brown already, indicating it was dry. Though there were several clumps of still fresh and dark-red congealed blood all throughout the hood of the car. The smell was unbearable, like hot metal mixed with flesh. It permeated into my nose and became impossible to cover, even after cleaning the car of all the stains. After 5 minutes of doing this, I then started to address the other issue at hand: the damage done to the front of the vehicle. The front license plate was the most damaged, it had been completely dented up due to the impact it made with that dog. My heart felt like it was going to beat out of my chest as I had no clue how to deal with this, especially in such a short period of time with zero experience in dealing with cars. I tried using a pair of pliers from the garage to bend the license plate into shape, though it was to no avail as the plate was simply too difficult to bend. I then realized we had a portable hair-dryer in the bathroom I could potentially use to heat the metal more into shape.

I ran into the bathroom and quickly grabbed the hair-dryer before running back outside and heating the license plate with it. I had it on high heat for several minutes, aimed at several parts of the license plate. Luckily my plan had actually worked, and the license plate bent seemingly back into normal form. Though there was still one more significant issue to deal with, and I only had maybe 10 minutes at this point to deal with it. The hood was still littered with little dents and holes from the impact of the dog's body. I started to desperately attempt to heat one of the dents

to shape it back to form, though I watched in horror as father's Ford Fusion drove down the street and got ready to pull into our garage. I quickly ran back into the house and decided to lay down on the couch as if to pretend I was taking a nap to avoid having to interact much. I hid the hair dryer under the couch for now so as to not arouse suspicion. The anxiety was starting to become *unbearable.* I also started to consider the consequences of that man screaming at me from earlier potentially remembering my mother's license plate number. Though I felt a slight confidence in the possibility that he was too traumatized and shaken to comprehend information.

CHAPTER IV

I must have been laying on the couch pretending to be asleep for 5 agonizing minutes before father actually came through the front door. He always liked to take his time doing things. As he walked in the front door I could instantly feel his bad energy, which actually matched my energy, giving me a twisted sense of comfort for once as I didn't have to put on a ridiculous persona.

"What are you doing?" He aggressively asked, as if I was doing something bad for laying down.

"I'm just napping after school, I'm tired" I said in response in a hesitant way, expecting some kind of show down.

"Did you do your chores today?" He asked condescendingly.

"Yes, of course" I said in response, I was lying. I had completely forgotten about my daily tasks, which included doing the family laundry and cleaning the living room. Though he hardly ever double checked and I doubt he actually cared, so I lied about it frequently. Though sometimes that did come back to bite me, usually in the form of a surprise harsh punishment when I least expected it.

"Your moms not going to be home for a few days, so we'll be going out nightly until then, alright? Get your shoes on in 30 minutes or so" He said, before walking upstairs likely to go change out of his work uniform. Having to go pretend everything is fine and have somewhat intimate dinners with my father at fast food restaurants after what I had been doing sounded like true hell on earth. I felt like my brain was on fire, and like my body was about to collapse from the sheer amount of stress hitting me all at once. I fully expected some type of police intervention tonight, be it for questioning or an outright raid and arrest.

I came to a horrifying realization upon reflecting on the day, *Angel*. Angel had firsthand witnessed me pursuing Veronica before I murdered her. Upon a simple CCTV footage search, they could see that I was the last one to know her whereabouts and that I was following her. I should have been far more careful, though the opportunity to strike felt too perfect to pass up. There were so many issues with my actions today that I couldn't think straight, and could only come to the conclusion that my death was soon to come. I realized that I should use the time I had to search the news for any information on Veronica, as it must have been reported by now. It had been hours since what I did, and it wasn't even really in an unpopulated area. I quickly ran to my computer in the basement and sat down on my worn down computer chair. I hastily turned on

the computer and went to Google News. However upon searching up my area, there was absolutely nothing about Veronica's situation. Even seeing an article stating that I was wanted by the police would be less unsettling than this level of uncertainty. I had absolutely no idea what was coming. Father suddenly came downstairs to the basement wearing different clothes.

"By the way I checked out your room and it is filthy, you need to respect your mother more if you want to keep living here" My father said as if he was some wise sage. It was laughable he was attempting to appeal to mother, considering the fact that her "business trips" were likely sexual affairs being had with coworkers. Every time she goes to them, she always dresses better than I have ever seen her look in my life. She never looks older than 25 due to the makeup she applies before those things. She always comes back from them extremely calm and satisfied too, not engaging in any of her usual fights with father for weeks after.

"Sorry I've just been busy" I mumbled quietly in response.

"Busy with what? School? You can get off your ass once in a while and help out" Father said in a condescending and obnoxious tone of voice, not understanding the reality of my situation in the slightest.

"What the hell is on your arm?" Father asked angrily.

Upon looking at my left arm, I was horrified to see bloodied fingerprints dried onto my arm. I hadn't even noticed them due to the intensity of everything going on. My stomach dropped to the floor as I scrambled to come up with an excuse for this situation.

"Where's my work hammer?" Father continued to press on with the angry questions. My heart was starting to beat out of my chest with fear.

"What the fuck are you up to?!" Father screamed and demanded to know. Suddenly the energy in the room became very cold and hostile.

"Nothing! I just fell over earlier when walking to school and scraped my arm up a bit. As for your work hammer I have no idea where it is, why would I know?" I said nervously, expecting to get pummeled in response. My lie was so bad that I couldn't help but smile a little bit. My father stared in silence at me for a few seconds before offering his attempt at levity.

"Okay, well get your shoes on and let's go get some sushi, I'm parched" Father said anxiously. It made me quietly chuckle that he said parched instead of hungry, he always used sophisticated words incorrectly. And he attempted to use said words a *lot*. I was getting annoyed that he kept micromanaging me, though I couldn't believe he was going to let the physical signs of suspicious

behavior he spotted go. I might be able to return to mother's Prius hood tonight and straighten the dents out again if he's being this stupid. Mother would definitely spot the dents within minutes of coming home. Father walked back upstairs, and I put my shoes on before following pursuit. After walking upstairs I quickly left out the front door and got into the passenger side of Father's car, which he was already in, browsing radio stations to choose from. I felt as if I didn't exist, and that this experience wasn't happening. Like my experiences weren't real things to be trusted. My vision was starting to mildly blur as well, and I felt lightheaded and sick to my stomach. Every word father said to me on the trip to whatever fast food shithole we were going to next was a scrambled mess of gibberish in my ears, as I could only hear the desperate screams of Veronica. I was highly alert, angry, paranoid and depersonalized, and was *seriously* not in the mood for this.

As we pulled into the parking lot of Rocky Mountain: Pies and Slices once again, I started to smell something noxious and genuinely unbearable, my sweatpants had a strange pattern of dried bodily fluids stained onto them, it may have been blood or it may have been something else entirely, but whatever it was certainly came from Veronica and it was in a bizarre claw pattern formation. I really should have changed my pants before leaving the house again, I couldn't think straight however. I got out of the car while feeling like an anvil was weighing me down due to how much I dreaded the situation. Me and father walked into the building and sat down at a lone table, before a much uglier waitress than the one from our last visit came over to our table to take our order. She was significantly overweight, at least by 100 pounds. She was unattractive and frumpy, she had ugly glasses that made her look like an elderly woman when she was *maybe* only about 27. She also had hideously dyed hair that was bright pink and quite unflattering. As expected, father's treatment of her was not so cheery and polite. He appeared standoffish and hostile with her just with his body language alone as he crossed his arms and anxiously shook his leg with impatience.

"Hi, are you here to take our order already?" Father asked, acting like a complete tool as per usual.

The waitress scoffed at his comment with her face.

"What do you mean already, you *just* came in the door" she rightfully stated.

"Alright sweetheart, I'll have a large Margherita Pizza and please try to get it to me within the next 10 minutes or I'm gonna have a talk with your manager, sound good?" Father said. I could feel the defeat coming from inside the waitress as I sat in agony due to my lack of ability to think straight to plan my way around potential upcoming consequences.

"I'll take a slice of ch-" I attempted to mutter before getting silenced by my father.

“Oh you’re fine you’ll have what I’m having” Father said condescendingly. I felt a surge of rage flow within me due to the unnecessary intimidation tactic. However I stopped being angry instantly once I realized that this was the least of my worries at this time.

“Ok and any drinks?” The waitress mumbled under her breath.

“Speak up?” Father said in a brutish way. He definitely heard her the first time.

“Any drinks?” She responded, on the verge of tears.

“Yes I think we will have 2 large glasses of Pepsi” He said. I *hated* Pepsi.

The waitress nervously walked back into the kitchen to register father’s order.

“So, how was your day?” Father asked, as if the last several minutes hadn’t happened. I could feel the rage starting to flow through me again as I was absolutely not in the mood to play a role and make up a pretend fantasy day that didn’t happen. Luckily, my father lived in fantasy, so this wasn’t a difficult task.

“It was alright, I have a lot of math homework to do though” I brought up casually, hoping to impress him with the fact that I was being “productive” so he wouldn’t start prodding me on other stuff.

“Nice, good job for getting that done frequently as you say, by the way you used to struggle with that real bad” He said. Him saying this aroused anxiety in me, as it showcased just how out of touch he was with my current situation, which likely meant a very scary showdown was coming soon. Not to mention it was only a matter of time until the school found a valid way to directly contact him again and alert him of my real behavior.

“Why do they hire those fat bitches anyways, did you see that? Who wants to look at that?” Father said of the waitress that had just taken our order. My discomfort was immeasurable. Though at least he was being slightly goofy, rather than his usual passive aggression that later resulted in me getting punished. Anything my father said, I refused to agree with, so I felt annoyed at his judgemental demeanor. Especially considering the **very real** problems coming his way soon.

“You know when you hitch a girl to shoot for better than that, right? I’ve taught you much better than that” My father boasted proudly, the insinuation that he had taught me anything was laughable at best.

“Don’t just stick it inside of any bitch that makes you cum” Father quietly said before laughing for way too long. Something was very off about him, he never acted this morbidly deranged in public. He must have been drunk, which wasn’t too uncommon for him in public. Though he never acted in such a grotesque way.

“Gross, dad” I said. It wasn’t that I couldn’t handle his vulgar statement, it was that it was coming from him.

“Ha, gross you say. I was hitting different cheerleader chicks on the daily at your age. I could be a daddy to more than just you.” He said the last part jokingly, though I didn’t find it very funny. I also heavily doubted the validity of his statement.

“Are you gay? You can tell me. You never talk about girls” Father asked condescendingly, as if he knew I didn’t want to talk about sex yet enjoyed pushing me to do so. I could almost see a leer form on his face as he asked me this.

“No, I’m not gay” I responded hesitantly, as I didn’t want to give him a reaction but was obligated to.

“Really now? Well then what kind of girl would be your dream girl?” He demanded to know. The fact he wouldn’t leave me alone about this sent a wave of rage down my stomach.

“Well, I’d probably want her to be tall, and have dark black flowing hair.” I said with honesty. Father actually looked quite intrigued.

“I’d want her to have a thin and beautiful figure, with just the right amount of makeup. I’d hope she’d be someone who was laid back and wore silly graphic tee-shirts and such” I said while smiling and staring my father directly in the eyes. He clenched his lips in approval while nodding his head slightly as the waitress brought out our order, and honestly I didn’t mind the order choice this time around. Even though I was far from hungry just a few minutes ago, actually seeing food in front of my face changed my tune at that moment.

As the waitress placed our pepsi filled glasses onto the table she asked if we needed anything else. My father used this opportunity to once again make her a punching bag for his emotional burdens.

“These aren’t large” My father drunkenly and obnoxiously stated. I was extremely embarrassed to be in the same room as him at this point.

“We aren’t a fast food restaurant” The waitress said in mild disbelief.

Father held in a smile and raised his eyebrows as he sarcastically and quickly muttered “Right”. As if I was in on some kind of joke with him disempowering the waitress. He had to have been hammered at this point, drinking behind my back at a consistent pace. At least I hope he wasn’t this drunk when he was driving me over here. The waitress walked away back into the kitchen and started mindlessly talking to the kitchen staff about our order. Meanwhile, father looked as if he was about to pass out.

I grabbed a plate as well as a napkin, and watched as the waitress brought out our mediocre looking pizza that basically just had mozzarella and tomato sprinkled on top of it and placed it on the table. The waitress walked away far quicker than my father could continue talking to her, I wonder if *that* was a coincidence. The pizza was actually delicious, and took my mind off of things for a few minutes.

“Your mother… will not be home for a few more days.” Father said in a very disappointed fashion.

“You spoke to her?” I asked.

“Earlier today on the phone. She said she was “very busy” with several coworkers and would be there for a few more days at the very least” He said in a very monotone voice. This was *very* good news for me, though my mother’s intentions sounded very devious and I couldn’t help but feel a surge of sadness upon thinking more about it. Father looked absolutely miserable and hardly touched his pizza, after being the one to want to go here in the first place.

“How’s the pizza?” He said defeatedly. A few seconds of silence passed.

“Tastes like shit” I responded while shaking in a nervous trance from thinking of my soon to be consequences. Father looked at me with a blank expression for a second, I was nervous he was going to do something cruel in response. However I was surprised once he started to burst out into laughter. It lasted for a good 5 seconds and sounded very drunken and idiotic.

“Can we just take this home?” I asked in a desperate tone of voice. Father sighed and then stared off into the distance.

“Sure,” He said while giving a fake smile.

Several minutes later, we were on our way back home with our pizza in a cardboard box on my lap. Being in such an innocent situation made me feel significantly more anxiety than when I was behaving criminally. It felt like such a stark contrast that I felt as if things were going to become very bad very quickly. After arriving at our driveway, I handed the pizza box to my father and went inside the house. I quickly ran downstairs to the basement to check the news once more to see if there was any update on my situation. To my complete and utter shock there was still nothing about Veronica or what I had done to her anywhere on the news. Which meant it was probably going to take a few days, *that* was going to be a few days of pure hell.

I trembled a bit in fear as I could hear father upstairs