

WE WERE OUT WALKING IN THE WOODS... IT HAD BEEN RAINING THE NIGHT BEFORE, AND YOU COULD SMELL IT IN THE AIR.

IT'S BEEN ALMOST TWO YEARS NOW, BUT I CAN REMEMBER THE LIGHT, THE SOUND OF THE FOREST, HOW CLEAR THE DAY WAS...



I WAS BABYSITTING DANIEL.



FOR SOME STUPID REASON I DECIDED TO TAKE HIM OUTSIDE.



I DIDN'T EVEN THINK TO TELL HIS PARENTS OR ANYONE ELSE WHERE WE WERE.



HEY-- COME BACK!  
DANIEL!!!



YOU'VE TOLD ME BITS OF THIS BEFORE, BUT NEVER THE WHOLE THING.

IT'S HARD FOR ME TO TALK ABOUT. HARD TO PUT IT INTO WORDS.



DANIEL?

HE'D RAN INTO THE HOUSE, AND I COULDN'T FIND HIM ANYWHERE.



AND THAT'S WHEN I SAW HIM, BLEEDING-- I THOUGHT HE WAS DEAD.



I SCREAMED FOR HELP, BUT IT WASN'T HELP THAT CAME.



WE WEREN'T ALONE IN THAT HOUSE. THERE WAS SOMEONE IN THE SHADOWS-- A MAN--



NO-- DON'T!



PLEASE!!!

A SEARCH PARTY FOUND US TWO DAYS LATER. THEY NEVER FOUND OUT WHO SHUT US IN THE HOLE... WHOEVER IT WAS KILLED ONE OF THE DOGS THAT TRAILED OUR SCENT... SNAPPED ITS NECK.

I DIDN'T SPEAK FOR TWO WEEKS AFTERWARDS, AND FOR DANIEL... WELL, THE DAMAGE WAS PERMANENT.

THAT WAS MY FAULT.

I DID THAT TO THAT LITTLE BOY, AND YET HE STILL LOVES ME. EVERY DAY HE DRAWS MY PICTURE, AND EVERY DAY HIS MOM SENDS THEM TO ME, BUT SHE NEVER SPEAKS TO ME--

SHE HATES ME FOR WHAT HAPPENED. I HATE ME.

AND THE NEW PICTURES?

I DON'T KNOW SEAN, I REALLY DON'T.

EVERYTHING CHANGED THAT DAY. THE WORLD WASN'T THE SAME. I'M SCARED OF THE DARK AND I CAN'T STOP THINKING. I QUESTION EVERYTHING AROUND ME AND I HATE IT.

I'M SICK OF BEING A LITTLE GIRL, BUT AT THE SAME TIME I JUST WANT EVERYTHING TO BE LIKE IT USED TO BE. IT DOESN'T MAKE SENSE.

I THINK I CAN UNDERSTAND THAT.

IT'S NOT THE SAME, BUT... WHEN I WAS YOUNGER, ALL I CARED ABOUT WAS GROWING UP, DRIVING A CAR, GETTING A GIRL AND BEING A MAN. ALL THAT BULLSHIT.

BUT EVERYTHING LOST ITS FUN. I MEAN, IT ONLY SEEMS LIKE YESTERDAY I WAS EIGHT. BEING "MATURE" SUCKS-- THERE'S NOTHING TO IT.

I KNOW... WE SENSE TIME PASSING AND THAT WE'RE GONNA DIE ONE DAY. THAT MAN IN THE HOUSE-- HE **SHOWED** ME THAT.

WHAT'S THE POINT? WE HAVE TO GO OUT INTO THE NIGHT KNOWING THAT ONE DAY WE'RE NEVER GOING TO RETURN.



I WANNA GROW UP, BUT I DON'T WANNA GROW OLD.

I DON'T WANNA DIE.

IT'S NOT ANYWHERE NEAR DARK,  
YET THE FIRST THING LISA  
DOES IS TURN THE LIGHT ON.

I WISH I COULD HELP HER.

LOOK, YOU'RE CLEARLY FREAKED OUT  
BY THOSE WIERD PICTURES, SO WHY  
DON'T WE GO OVER TO THE  
KID'S HOUSE?

IT'S TOO  
LATE. THE SUN  
WILL BE GOING  
DOWN SOON AND  
I'M NOT READY  
FOR THAT.

THAT  
AND... I'M  
POSITIVE THERE  
WAS SOMEONE  
AT THE FAIR-  
GROUND.

IS IT PATRONIZING TO SEE  
HER LIKE A BABY SISTER? TO  
THINK THAT I CAN PROTECT HER?

SAY SOMETHING YOU DUMBASS,  
MAKE HER FEEL OKAY.

I'M  
SORRY. I'M  
RAMBLING. I  
JUST CAN'T THINK  
STRAIGHT RIGHT  
NOW.

TAKE A  
SHOWER.

A SHOWER?

YUP, A  
SHOWER. IT  
ALWAYS WORKS  
FOR ME-- CLEARS  
MY HEAD OUT LIKE A  
GOOD SLEEP DOES.  
KINDA LIKE STARTING  
THE DAY AGAIN.  
DE-STRESS THE  
DIS-TRESS.

BESIDES,  
YOU  
STINK.

I SO  
DO NOT.  
WHAT ARE  
YOU GONNA  
DO?

I DUNNO.  
ABUSE YOUR  
CABLE PROBABLY--  
SWITCH BETWEEN "THE  
WIZARD OF OZ" ON  
MOVIES AND "SEE YOU  
NEXT WEDNESDAY"  
ON YOUR PORN  
CHANNEL--

--CALL  
NIKKI.



YEAH?

YEAH, YOU OBVIOUSLY HAVEN'T NOTICED HER CRUSH?



HER CRUSH?

THAT'S WHAT I SAID, SHE'S BEEN GIVING YOU PUPPY EYES FOR WEEKS-- AND NOT IN A SUBTLE WAY.

NIKKI? ME? NO WAY.



YES WAY. I LOVE YOU SEAN, BUT IF YOU SPEND ALL YOUR TIME TRYING TO LOOK AFTER ME, YOU WON'T SEE WHAT'S AROUND YOU.



A HOT-- NO, GORGEOUS-- GIRL LIKE NIKKI WHO LIKES ME AND I DON'T EVEN SEE IT?

IT GOES BACK TO WHAT WE TALKED ABOUT EARLIER, WITH EVERY DAY THAT PASSES I NOTICE LESS AND LESS. GOTTA LOVE ROUTINE.



BUT STILL, NIKKI! MAN, I WOULD IN A HEARTBEAT.



AND TYPICALLY ENOUGH, THERE'S NO ANSWER.

CAN'T LEAVE HER A MESSAGE, BECAUSE I'LL SCREW IT UP.



I WONDER WHERE SHE IS?