Cover art drawn By Cajeana zrihana Knox

A Wolf In Sheep’s Clothing

A Novella

Chapter 1

 She hung up the phone with an expression of fear on her face. It was the fourth call that night from someone she didn't know and never wanted to. Every time she answered the phone all the voice said is "You may not know me now but soon you'll never forget me." The voice was one she didn't seem to recognize and yet was vaguely familiar.

 Lara couldn't imagine who would be getting their kicks scaring her like this, at least deep down that's all she was hoped it was. Suddenly there was a feeling of eyes watching her but that was impossible because all the blinds in the apartment were closed tight.

 The phone ringing again nearly scared her to death. She entertained thoughts of not answering the phone but decided she wanted to vent to the person playing this sick joke.

 "Leave me alone", shouting as she picked up the receiver.

 "Dear are you alright?" She heard her mom say.

 "Sorry, mom it's nothing." She curled up on the couch and started biting her nails. "I thought you were someone else."

 He just sat there watching the television screen. His wanting for Lara has been developing for a long time. Now the plan was coming into focus and he would soon have her.

 The cameras he strategically placed in her apartment were working like a charm. He watched her practically rolled up in a ball on the couch. It was getting him excited.

 "I fucking want her so bad." He muttered under heavy breathing.

 "Soon my dear. Soon," the voice behind him said softly. "You'll get what you want and I'll get what I deserve."

Chapter 2

 "Mom you didn't have to come over." Lara was still chewing on her fingernails. It's a bad habit she's had since she was a kid.

 "Now what kind of mother would I be if I wasn't there when my daughter needed me?"

 Lara and her mom looked a lot alike. Both had long blonde hair and were physically fit. Her mom could have passed for a slightly older sister. Lara was about two inches taller standing at five foot eight. Her mom even started dressing a lot like Lara after divorcing her father. Wearing mini skirts and mid-riff shirts. It sometimes made Lara feel uncomfortable and embarrassed.

 "I'm sure it's just a friend playing some kind of joke or something." She didn't even believe it as she said it.

 "Now what kind of friend would do such a thing?" Sitting on the couch and putting her arm around her daughter.

 A knock at the door made Lara jump.

 "Don't worry it's probably just Adam. I'll get it." She patted Lara on the cheek and headed to the door.

 Adam is her mom's new boyfriend. They have been going out for about three months. Lara found him nice enough of a guy but didn't see her mother's much since they started dating. She also thought he was a very handsome gentleman with that little clef in his chin but found him a bit on the boring side. All she knew about him was he was a local hotshot attorney.

 After the two exchanged pleasantries Adam turned to Lara, "Your mom told me what was going on. Are you alright?"

 "I'm fine. I apologize for my mother dragging you into this." She decided to get off the couch and get something to drink. "Since you're both here either of you like something to drink."

 "I'll have some water dear" her mother replied.

 "Same for me" he sounded like a robot.

 "Two water coming up." Trying not to sound on edge.

 Her mom sat back down on the couch while Adam decided to check out the apartment and all the decorations of wolves and Indians.

 "I like your décor."

 "Thanks." She walked back into the living room carrying glass in each hand.

 The ringing of the phone caused her to drop both of them spilling water everywhere,

 "Fuck" she shouted.

 Her mom bent down quickly and retrieved the glasses. "Don't get that honey."

 "Would you like me to answer it?" Adam said sounding like a protective father.

 "No", she replied sternly.

 It was nearly midnight now and she rarely got calls this late. Lara took a deep breath, placed her hand on the receiver, and slowly picked up.

 "He… hello." Her hand holding the receiver shaking violently.

 "Hey babe sorry I'm calling so late," said the voice on the other line.

 "Brad is that you? Dammit, you scared the shit out of me. Are you drunk again?"

Chapter 3

After a huge argument, Brad convinced Lara to let him spend the night. That didn't sit well with her mother who stormed out of the apartment followed by Adam trailing her like a lost puppy dog. Halfway out the door he turned around winked at Lara and said: "Don't worry I'll take care of this."

 She has been dating Brad for a month and a half but they still hadn't slept together. It sure wasn't from the lack of him trying. It was the reason for many of their arguments, which seemed to get more frequent in the last two weeks. Lara just wanted to make sure this time she had something real before giving in to the desire.

 Brad tried to convince her to let him sleep next to her on the bed. Promising to behave. She wouldn't budge and made him sleep on the lumpy couch. She wasn't worried about him, it was her feeling she believed might betray her if he was so close.

 She was awakened by her alarm at the usual six o'clock so she could slave away at the office. Lara worked at the local junior high school as a secretary. It's where she met Brad. He worked at different schools teaching disabled kids sports. He came to the junior high she worked at every Tuesday and Friday. She loved how patient he was when teaching the kids, that's one of the things that first caught her interest in him.

 Lara stumbled her way to the living room and was surprised to not see Brad on the couch. Then a wonderful aroma caught her attention.

 "Hey, honey want some breakfast?"

 "Wow," she said as she turned and saw the table set with two plates, both consisting of eggs bacon, and toast. "Thank you, honey." Kissing him on the cheek before sitting down.

 They ate breakfast enjoying pleasant conversation until Brad brought up the phone calls. She refused to talk about them passing them off as a bad prank.

 Brad's phone rang as they were clearing the table. He spoke for a moment flipped it shut and said, "I got to go." He grabbed the gym bag he brought and headed for the door.

 "Who was that?" A look of confusion was on her face.

 "It's Charlie, he's picking me up. I couldn't drive over last night because I was too wasted."

 "Well call me later."

 Brad walked over kissed her on the lips. "You can count on it."

 After he was gone Lara just stood there for a moment and began entertaining the idea of letting him spend the night again but not on the couch. Her phone rang and she answered it with the biggest smile on her face. The smile faded quickly as she heard the voice on the other line.

"Soon my dear you will be mine."

 Brad hopped in his friend's car. Charlie flipped his cell phone shut "So did anything happens last night?" Giving him a nudge and a wink.

 "No, but soon." He turned and looked out the window feeling a little embarrassed.

 "I can't believe you haven't fucked her yet." Charlie shook his head, "If it was me I would have nailed her already."

Brad's face went bright red, "Just drive."

Chapter 4

 Lara laid on the couch not wanting to move or do anything. She started biting what was left of her fingernails. The phone rang but this time she wasn't going to answer it. The machine picked up.

 "Lara, it's Adam. Just thought I'd let you know I've talked to your mom and calmed her down. We have discussed it and thought maybe it would be best if you stayed here with us for a few days. Just until you find out who's messing with you."

 "Who does this guy think he is?" Lara thought to herself. The message made her feel a little icky; she shivered when replaying the recorder.

 Her father died a little over two years ago in a car crash. Although he left her nearly all of his estate, worth nearly a quarter-million dollars she would give it all back to him back. She long to hear his voice right now. She smiled as she imagined him there giving one of his it will be all right hugs.

 The phone snapped her out of the daydream. Once again she allowed the machine to get it.

 "Lara this is Susan, nine-fifteen and since you not here at work and haven't called I was beginning to…"

 She grabbed the phone as quickly as she could. Trying to sound tired she said, "Uhhh sorry Susan I must have forgotten to set my alarm last night."

 "Are you alright?" Sounding concerned.

 "Yeah I'm fine, I will be there in about half an hour."

 She rushed to get ready and headed off to work. The whole time getting that feeling again of being watched.

 Lara arrived at work around ten o'clock and had trouble concentrating all day. People kept asking her if she was all right and she would smile and just say "Yeah I'm just a little tired."

 Since she had arrived late she stayed a little past quitting time to finish up some paperwork before leaving. It was nearly six o'clock and all she wanted to do was go home, unplug the phone and take a long hot bath. She walked along the empty corridors seeing no signs of life until she encountered the head custodian. She gave him a friendly hello and smiled, he in return just smiled and tipped his cap. She kept on walking wanting to just get to her car and get the hell out of there. Suddenly a feeling of fear washed over her. It was the feeling of an evil presence watching. Lara stopped put her hand on her chest and tried to catch her breath. She finally worked up the courage to look behind her. When she did there were no signs of anyone present, even the janitor was gone.

 She practically ran the rest of the way to her car but was thrown off by another surprise. Tears began to run down her cheek as she saw a dozen red roses on her windshield.

Chapter 5

 Lara's whole body was trembling. Her knees felt as if they were about to give out as she approached the car. Barely able to remain in control of her left hand as she reached for the flowers. Quickly she snatched them off the windshield and ripped the envelope open to read the card.

 "Hi sweetie, I know you've had a rough night and thought these would let you know I'm there for you. Love, Brad". Fear turned to happiness. Her smile was a mile wide.

 The tears of fear quickly turned to an outpour of relief. She began to sob uncontrollably. The tears were blurred her vision. Lara wiped them away with her sleeve until the waterworks stopped.

 She decided to stop and smell the roses. The happy feeling was short-lived when a loud noise came from the direction of the science building.

 Lara fumbled with her keys as she tried to open the door. Once opened she threw everything on the passenger seat nearly crushing the flowers. She fired up the engine and was gone like a bat out of hell.

 By the time she arrived at her apartment, Lara had calmed down. She couldn't wait to get upstairs and call Brad to thank him for the flowers and invite him to spend the night.

 Lara stuck the key in the door but realized it was already unlocked. Slowly she turned the knob and opened the door. Peaking in and looking around the room she didn't notice any signs of anyone present or anything being out of place. She slid in quickly locked the door and leaned against it trying to remember locking it this morning. That's possible cause I was in a rush she thought. She continued to lean on the door tilted her head back and breathed a sigh of relief.

 "Hey girlfriend", came a voice from the hallway.

 Lara dropped the flowers and began to turn and unlock the door until she noticed whom the voice belonged to. "Jesus Christ, you scared the fuck out of me you stupid tramp."

 "Who you calling a tramp you whore," said her long-time friend Theresa in a sarcastic tone.

 Lara picked up the flowers and hugged her friend. Theresa was Lara's college roommate. After they graduated in two thousand three they got an apartment together to share expenses until both could get real jobs and on their feet. Theresa moved out eight months ago after marrying her college sweetheart.

 "What are you doing here?" Lara couldn't contain her excitement.

 "I missed you, sweetie. We haven't seen much of each other lately."

 "Well, you're an old married woman now." Lara giggled.

 "Hey watch who you are called old. Of course, I guess that makes you an old maid."

She stepped back and looked Lara over. "My God you look fantastic as always, and what's with the flowers. Still the heartbreaker I see."

 "His name is Brad and…", she couldn't finish her before she was grabbed by the hand and yanked toward the couch.

 " Sit and tell me everything."

 Lara went through everything from Brad to the current phone calls she was receiving.

 "Did you call the police?" Theresa asked.

 "No. I mean maybe it's a prank and I would look stupid then." Wanting to change the subject she said, "So how is married life? You and Jake doing ok?"

 "Yeah, everything is great." The tone in her voice didn't reflect what Theresa was saying.

 "What's wrong hon?"

 "Nothing… well it's just that I think sometimes he wishes I was someone else."

 "What are you talking about he loves you." Putting her hand on Theresa's back to try and comfort her. "Besides I can't imagine him liking anyone else."

 "What are you talking about? You knew he always had a thing for you just like every other guy on campus. He even jokes about having you over for a threesome."

 "Men, they can be such pigs. I sure it doesn't mean anything by it."

 "At first I found it funny but after a few times it gets under your skin."

 "I'm sorry hon, listen give me a minute I need to call Brad real quick then we will talk about this." She bounced off the couch and headed to the phone.

 Theresa watched her with a look of disdain and envy. "You bitch," she shouted and was out the door.

Chapter 6

 "I don't know what her problem is." Lara was pouring them both a glass of wine. "I don't even want to talk about it. Tonight is about you and me."

 "Sorry babe. So you and me huh, sounds great."

 She raised her glass, "Let us start with a toast. To you and me."

 Brad raised his glass, "To us."

 They both drank as they stared at each other. The conversation stayed light and minimal as they enjoyed the dinner Lara had cooked. It was filet minion, baked potatoes, and boiled cauliflower. She even placed two can candles on the table for a romantic setting.

 After supper, they journeyed to the couch with their glasses refreshed and filled. They enjoyed the more lighthearted conversation and flirty talk. Eventually, it became serious when Brad leaned in and kissed her gently on the lips.

 The soft kisses turned into full-on making out. Lara pulled Brad's shirt right off without missing a beat. She then ripped off her blouse to reveal no bra and some large soft supple breasts which Brad went for like a hungry newborn. He began to run his tongue all over them like he was licking his favorite flavored popsicle. Lara arches her back to allow him free reign. Just as she reached to undo his pants the phone rang.

 Lara stopped immediately and looked over at the phone.

 "Don't answer it" Brad pleaded.

 "I'm not," she continued staring until the machine picked up.

 "Lara it's your mother. I wish you would consider coming and staying with us for few days. Call me."

 Lara shrugged it off and proceeded to pull Brad's pants and underwear down. She lifted her skirt and slid right onto his cock. Brad grabbed onto her ass to help her thrust as hard as she could. Brad stroked her thighs while biting on her nipples as she leaned over him. The phone rang again.

 "Dammit mother," she said under her breath. Lara grabbed Brad by the hand and said, "Let us go."

 They entered the bedroom and she slammed the door. They both removed what was left of their clothes. Lara hoped on the bed and said, "Oh Brad fuck me."

 Brad grabbed pulled her to the edge of the bed placed her legs over his shoulders and went to town.

 The answering machine picked up, "Bitch your fucking mine you understand."

 He slammed the phone down and watched them go at it like animals. "I'm going to kill that bastard."

 "I think we can arrange that. Leave it to me." Replied a voice soft but with a sinister tone.

 "No, he's mine. I'm gonna show him how to do her before I kill them both."

His breathing became erratic.

 She sat beside him, "Now your talking."

Chapter 7

They stood at the front door wrapped up in each other's arms. Lara didn't want him to leave and Brad wasn't trying too hard even though he needed to be at work soon.

 "Thank you for last night." She kissed him on the lips and stared into his eyes.

 "Are you kidding me, it's I who should be thanking you." He picked her up and put her back down. "I love you."

 Silenced echoed throughout the room as all Lara could do was look at Brad like a deer caught in the headlights.

 "Hello, did you hear what I said?" He began to lose his smile awaiting her response.

 "Yes… uh, I… I love you too." She planted another big kiss on his lips that returned that beautiful smile that always made Lara melt.

 "Well as much as I hate to leave work beckons me. But I will see you in a couple of hours."

 "That's right today is Friday." Her cheeks turned a light shade of pink. "But please don't say anything to anyone."

 "Ah so you're ashamed of me," he said in a mocking undertone. "Just kidding, don't worry about it I don't kiss and tell."

 Brad gave her one last kiss and was out the door. Lara shut the door and locked it then stood a moment daydreaming. She strolled toward the kitchen to make some coffee and get her day going. She passed the answering machine and noticed the blinking light.

 "Dammit, mother." Lara played the message.

 Forgetting she was in nothing but a tee-shirt and thong Lara bolted for the front door and ran down the hallway and outside in hopes of catching Brad but there was no sign of his car. She heard a couple of whistles that jolted her memory as to how little she had on

 "Oh shit!" She pulled her tee-shirt down and bolted back inside to her apartment. Once inside she bolted the door and made her way to the phone.

 "Come on Brad pick up your phone," she was saying quietly.

 "Sorry I missed your call but leave a name and your number, if I don't have it and I will call you back."

 She heard the tone, "Brad please call me back right away, it's urgent."

 Lara decided there was no time for coffee now. She got dressed quickly without taking a shower because she didn't want to miss Brad's call back. After getting ready she just sat on the couch waiting for the phone to ring until it was time to head out. She called one more time but once again got the answering machine, hung up, and headed out the door.

 Her mind was on one thing while working. She couldn't remember what she was doing and if she was even doing it right. She just kept going through the motions while awaited Brad's arrival. It was now ten-fifteen and he was scheduled around eleven. Fortunately, he has to come into her office to check-in. Her eyes would drift to the clock every few minutes awaiting the top of the hour.

 "Ten fifty-two come on Brad get here soon." She mumbled.

 "What's your problem?" A snotty female voice said.

 Lara turned to see Angie Helley a regular substitute teacher at the school. "What are you talking about?"

 "Off in your little world again miss perfect."

 "What is your problem?"

 Angie does this every time she comes into the office, always giving Lara an attitude. She could never figure out why because they never really ever talked.

 "You're my problem," and stormed off.

 Lara shook her head then looked back to find Angie talking to Steve Magle a full-time history teacher at the school. They seemed to be looking at her while talking and laughing. Angie then gave one last dirty glance, giggled, and walked away. Steve then gave a wink and a smile before disappearing.

 Steve has always had a crush on her, he's even asked her out a few times even though she always turned him down.

 "Hey, Lara have you talked to Brad today?" Susan asked as she approached the desk.

 Lara felt a little flushed at the question. "Uhhh… no, I mean why would you ask me that?"

 "Has he called the office? It's after eleven and he hasn't shown up. I called his office and they say they haven't heard from him."

 Lara immediately picked up the phone and called Brad's cell.

 "Hello Lara," said the voice she feared, "I've been expecting your call."

Chapter 8

 "After work go home and await instructions and don't call the police or you'll never see Brad alive again."

 Lara just sat there speechless.

 "Do you understand?" Anger rose from his voice.

 "Yes… uh yes, just please don't hurt him."

 Click, the line was dead.

 Lara tried to continue working but wasn't getting anything done. She grabbed her purse and headed to her bosses' office.

 "Maggie I got to go, something came up. I'm sorry"

 "You too." Maggie scowled as she slammed a desk drawer shut.

 "What are you talking about?" Lara looked confused.

 "Well first off Steve Magle just took off a few minutes ago and then that substitute teacher Angie something suddenly had to leave and now you. Oh and not to mention Brad Wilson and Larry Bernard are both no-call no-shows today. I mean what am I running here a circus?"

 "Wait Larry the janitor?"

 "Yes of course. Why do you ask?"

 "I'm sorry I gotta go." She left before Maggie could try and guilt her into staying.

 While waiting at home to hear from the freak Lara tried to eat something knowing that she was going to need all her strength to get through this. She simply toasted a couple of pieces of bread and washed it down with a glass of water. After finishing eating she decided to lay her head down while formulating a plan. Nothing was coming to her because she had no idea what the plan of the enemy was.

 A sound awoke Lara. She glanced over at the clock with blurry vision. Once the numbers came into focus she saw it was ten past six. She heard the noise again and realized it was the front door.

 "Oh my god," she whispered.

 Lara grabbed a baseball bat Brad gave her a couple of weeks ago. She wasn't going to take it at first but he insisted. Said that it was at least some protection. She put the bat over her right shoulder and opened the door.

 "Charlie, what are you doing here?"

Chapter 9

 Lara hesitated but finally decided to let Charlie in, she kept the bat ready for action.

 "Why are you here?"

 "I think you know." He gave a slight snicker as he entered the apartment. "It's about Brad."

 She quickly raised the bat ready to strike.

 Charlie quickly ducks and held his arms up as if they would be any kind of protection. "Whoa calm down."

 "Don't tell me to calm down you sick fuck! What did you do with Brad?" Her face was turning bright red as she kept the bat ready for action.

 "I don't know where he is that's why I came to see you."

 She stood there for a moment trying to rationalize the situation, finally lowering the bat, "God I'm sorry, the last couple of days have been hell."

 "Come on sit down and tell me what's going on."

 They both sat down on the couch and Lara placed the bat in her lap.

 "Well, Brad stayed the night here and then left first thing this morning." She began rolling the bat back and forth on her legs. "When I found out he didn't show up for work I called his cell phone but got no answer." A little lie but she didn't want to risk telling Charlie and putting Brad's life in danger. She began to cry.

 "Shhhh, it is alright." He took the bat out of her hand and placed it on the coffee table. He put his arm around her and she laid her head on his shoulder. "You should've known that would happen after you two had sex."

 "What?" She lifted her head from his shoulder, "How did you…"

 Charlie leaned forward putting his weight on her. "How do I know, well why else would he be avoiding you know." He was now completely on top of her, "He got what he wanted. I mean that's all your good for you stupid tramp."

 Lara slapped him across the face. "Get off me."

 He grabbed her right hand so she swung with the left. Charlie managed to snag that one too. Firmly gripping both he placed them over her head.

 "And now that he got him it's my turn. But I'm not gonna play the waiting game." He began running his tongue on her neck.

 "Let me go." She managed to free a leg and knee him in the groin.

 Charlie fell to the floor and Lara stood up, she kicked him twice in the stomach.

 "Tell me what you've done with Brad?" As she went for a third kick Charlie managed to grab her foot and pull her to the ground.

 He immediately laid on top of her using all his weight to keep her pinned down. He placed his right hand over her mouth and lifted her skirt with the left. Then he tore her panties off, "Now I'm gonna show you what a real man is like."

 She struck him repeatedly in the head but seemed to not affect him. He then raised his right hand and struck her across the jaw briefly stunning her. Charlie sat up and began to undo his pants.

 "So you like it rough do ya bitch." He pulled his pants and underwear down and leaned down kissing Lara on the neck.

 Just as was about to enter her she took one desperate reach onto the coffee table and brought the bat down over his back. She heard a loud crack and Charlie fell on top of her. Quickly she pushed him aside and ran for the front door. She fumbled opening the locks. Her desperation grew when she heard him stirring and saw him starting to get up. Finally, she was able to work the locks and the door flew open. Lara was surprised to see a familiar face on the other side of the door.

 "Help me please," she fell into his arms and began to cry.

 Adam put his arm around her and said, "What's the matter?"

Chapter 10

 "Please just let's get out of here, I will explain it later" Lara cried and grabbed him by his arm trying to pull him toward the stairs.

 He followed her without saying a word. Quickly they went outside and to his two-thousand-five Lexus parked by the curd right. Adam unlocked the door and helped her in. He got in the car then revved the engine and took off without even looking for traffic.

 "What the hell is going on and what happened to you." Seeing she was still crying he took his handkerchief out of his pocket and handed it to her.

 Lara took it blew her nose and tried to wipe the tears away as more continued to streamline down her face. "It's Brad's friend Charlie," she said through the sobbing, "He's the caller. He just tried to… to rape me."

 "What! Oh my God, are you ok? Maybe I should go back and take care of this."

 "No please just take me to my mom's please."

 "All right but I should at least call the police." Adam grabbed his cell and dialed.

He told the operator the situation and she took all the information. He let her know the address they would also be at and hung up.

 "Okay, they are on their way to your place. They will also send someone to your mothers."

 "But what about Brad?" She blurted out.

 "What about Brad?" He touched the side of her cheek. "Is he in on it too?"

 "No, but he has Brad hidden somewhere."

 "Are you sure?"

 "Yes of course I am. When I called his phone this morning that voice answered and threatened to kill Brad if I called the cops." She looked out the window and wiped her tears.

 "Well if the cops get to him he won't be able to harm anyone anymore. So you haven't talked to Brad since he left your place this morning."

 Lara turned and stared at Adam, "What? How did you know Brad stayed… oh my god it is you."

 "What are you talking about your…" Lara grabbed the steering wheel causing the car to careen over the center divider and crash into a light pole rendering them both unconscious.

Chapter 11

 Lara slowly regained consciousness the pain in her head was intense. The throbbing was like a drum solo at a rock concert. Her forehead was feeling damp. She touched just below the hairline. Through foggy vision, she could see red on her fingers.

 She shook her head trying to clear the cobwebs forming but that only increased the dizziness. Realizing Adam was still unconscious she knew that she had to make a break for it now.

 As she tried to exit the car pain from the right knee shot through her body. Slowly she put wait on it but crumbled to the ground grabbing the injured leg and wincing in pain.

 She set holding her leg and looking around for help but the effort was in vain. The street was pretty empty this time of day. Lara figured if she could stand up she could make it to her mom's house only a few blocks away. Using the hood of the car for the support she made her way to her feet putting the bulk of the weight on her left leg.

 In the distance, she could see a vehicle approaching. It looked to be an old beat-up Volkswagon van. The street was not a very busy one this time of day and her trust was getting low. Just then a sound came from the car, she turned her head to find that Adam was beginning to awaken. Her only instinct was to run away. With everything she had Lara scampered off into an alley across the street using all her survival instincts to ignore the immense amount of pain flowing from her leg to brain.

 When she was safely in the shadows of the alley she collapses against the wall and slides down using a garbage can as protection from a line of sight to wear the wrecked car sat. Her breathing was erratic and sweat began to cause the watered-down blood to trickle down her face and into the left eye.

 Using the back of her hand to wipe it away didn't help much. Her vision was slightly blurred as she watched the man in the van stopped to check out the accident. He looked vaguely familiar causing her concern that it may be Adam's accomplice.

 Using the wall for leverage she made it back up and limp as quick as she could why the unknown person attended to her stalker. The journey to her mom's seemed like forever with the throbbing in the leg and pounding in her head. The three blocks felt like the Boston Marathon.

 Lara was relieved to see her mom's car sitting in the driveway but felt uneasy quickly when she knocked on the front door to find it ajar. The feeling of uneasiness didn't keep her from pushing the door open gently letting out a creaking that sounded as loud as a gunshot that made her heart skip a beat.

 "Mom!! It Lara… are you here?"

 Nothing but silence. Lara proceeded to step inside, "Mother!!"

 Nothing seemed to be out of place yet the pit of her stomach felt raw from something gnawing at her. She noticed the door to the basement open and light escaping the opening.

 "Mom you down there?" She shouted as she made her way to the door. Once she reached the entry a voice finally replied.

 "Yes dear, come on down. Just looking through some old things."

Lara fumbled her way down the stairs.

 "Oh my God dear what happened to you?"

 "Oh, mother I think your boyfriend kidnapped Brad and is the one stalking me." She tried not to cry but to no prevail.

 Her mom took her by the arm directing her toward a couch. "Come here and sit down and tell me what happened."

 Through watery eyes, Lara saw the tube top and mini skirt mother was wearing but were too upset to care. Her mom kept her arm around Lara as they and began to gently rock back and forth.

 "Brad dis… dis… disappeared and I got a call telling me to wait at home for…" she wiped her nose with her left hand and sniffed. "Then Brad's friend tried to t… t… to…" she began to ball uncontrollably.

 Her mom stroked the back of her hair, "shhhhh… it alright dear, I am here now."

 "No you don't understand, Charlie tried to…" she felt like vomiting but used her will to hold it in. "To rape me so I thought he was behind those phone calls but when I got away I ran into Adam in the hallway. I was having him bring me here but he seemed to know too much bout my life so I think that… that…"

 "Are you crazy?" A voice shouted.

 Lara turned to see Adam standing at the top of the stairs. "You stay away from me you crazy bastard" tucking her head into the bosom of her mother for protection.

 Adam began to slowly descend the stairs holding his left leg and wincing.

 "What did you do to my daughter?" She never heard such fury in her mother's voice.

 "I didn't do a damn thing I was trying to bring her here and she freaked out and crashed my car."

 "You stay away from her." Mother shouted.

 "What are you…"

 His words were cut short but three loud blasts. Lara covered her ears. Not sure what had just happened she jerked her head around to find Adam at the bottom of the stairs with a crimson chest.

 She stood up in disbelief staring at him. "My Godmother what did you do?"

 "Well I couldn't very well let him ruin our plan could I?" Her mom's voice sounded cold and lifeless.

 Lara turned to find the barrel of the gun kissing her nostrils. Terror spread across her face as the curtain to the back of the basement opened and a familiar face walked out. In the background, monitors lit up with what looked like views of her apartment.

 She closed her eyes and hoped to wake up from this nightmare.

Chapter 12

 Lara opened her eye and shock replaced fear for the moment as her head swirled with many thoughts, especially with her earlier encounter with the monster before her. She remained speechless as she looked at him then back at her mom trying to figure out what was going goon.

 "Why if I didn't know any better I would say you were surprised to see me." The corner of Charlie's lip curled up giving him the most twisted grin.

 "My dear child," her mother's sounding voice snapped her back into focus. "You must be wondering what is going on?" Circling behind her and holding the gun to the back of her skull."

 "Mom I…" was all she could muster in response.

 A sudden push on her left shoulder sent Lara sprawling to the couch. Her two assailants stood side by side in front of her. She couldn't see either face for they had become shadows with the only light in the room behind them.

 "Well, I guess I can tell you now. I worked like hell to put your father through college. I held two jobs while he did nothing but study and party." Her mom's breathing was becoming heavy and intense. "Then you came along. I gave birth to you, thirteen hours in labor. Then you became his, his everything."

 "Mom I never…" her words halted by a smack across the check. Lara pressed a hand to her jaw in hopes it would ease the pain.

 "Shut up you stupid tramp!! You… You were the reason we split up. Nothing I did was good enough anymore. NO!! Not with his little princess around. So after you left for college your father left me. Guess without you around he had no reason to stay. Then all I got was some lousy alimony payments while he was living it up in a thriving business. Well Since I am confessing you might as well know I killed him."

 Suddenly Lara's whole body felt as if it was shutting down. "What?"

 "Barb," Charlie shouted.

 "Hush," her mom exclaimed. "It's not like she'll be around long enough to tell anyone."

 "Hey, we made a deal." Charlie retorted.

 Her mom scratched Charlie's chin with the barrel f the gun. "Oh don't worry you'll get to have your fun with her first. Let's bring out the audience to watch."

 Charlie disappeared into the darkness and returned pushing a desk chair on wheels out. A person sat in the chair with both arms tied to the rests. It was Brad.

Chapter 13

 Charlie straddled Lara holding his hand down above her head.

 Brad mumbled through the duct tape over his mouth.

 "You two play nice." Her mom said. She then turned to Brad, "Enjoy the show. I've got to take care of a few details for my daughter's untimely death."

 Lara kicked her legs profusely in hopes of throwing Charlie off. It wasn't working.

 Charlie quickly slapped her face and grabbed her hand before she could hit him with it. "Calm the fuck down. We are gonna have a fun time. I promise." Wink.

 The chair squeaked from Brad's constant wiggling as he mumbled more words.

 "What's the matter, bro? Not like you were going to marry her. You got yours, now it's my turn."

Lara stunned by the slap laid still. Charlie opened her shirt and began to massage her breasts over her bra. He looked up and closed his eyes as he continued to fondle. "Oh yeah, that's it." His voice was raspy.

Brad used his feet to bring the chair close to the couch. Charlie immediately lifted his left hand and pushed the chair with great force. The chair flew into the wall and toppled over with Brad still strapped on. A small pool of blood developed on the floor from his head.

Charlie returned to the fondling for a minute. Then he removed his hands to undo his belt. Lara began to stir. Before he could get his zipper down Lara began swinging at him but he quickly blocked her attempts and pinned her down.

"Oh, that's right. You like it rough. Well, baby then you'll love this." Charlie snickered.

Lara wiggled profusely as Charlie leaned forward and ran his tongue along her neck. Just as he began to trace his tongue down her chest a loud crash came from upstairs. Then what sounded like glass breaking.

"What the fuck now?" Charlie's fist came straight down on Lara's nose like a sledgehammer sending blood flying and rendering Lara incapacitated.

"Be right back. Don't go anywhere."

Through blurry vision Brad watched Charlie bounce up the stairs then looked back to see Lara laying flat on the couch with blood trickling down her cheek.

A lot of banging, yelling, and stomping came from upstairs.

Brad tried to loosen the duct tape holding his arms in place. No luck. Using just the wall and his feet tried to set the chair upright. Still no luck. He began to squirm trying to bring the chair closer to the couch as he made much noise as possible through his taped mouth in hopes of awakening Lara. The chair inched closer but she remained lifeless.

He finally got close enough to the couch to bang his knees against it. Lara barely stirred. Brad continued to bang his knees on the couch despite the pain it shot through his body. He also continued to try and work for his hands-free of the tape but it was only causing more hurting from the tape pulling on his skin.

Lara began to make grumbling noises but was still seemed a long way from being coherent enough to do anything. More crashing noises filtered to the basement from upstairs.

Suddenly loud thumping noises came from the stairwell. Brad looked over to see to figures rolling down the stairs and landing on Adam's lifeless body. They looked to be scuffling over an object. Brad could tell one of them was Charlie but couldn't make out the other individual.

"Brad." A feeble voice said.

He looked up to see Lara turned on her side looking back at him. Her nose was broken and gushing blood.

Lara slowly used her arms as leverage to sit up. She glanced over at eh commotion on the stairs then attempted to stand up. She fell right to her knees. Sitting up she scooted in front of Brad and began to try and pull the tape off.

Brad was yelling through the tape.

"Oh God, I am so sorry." Lara looked around for something sharp that might cut through the tape. She could see nothing from where she sat. With all her will she was able to push herself up. Legs felt like jello but she managed to walk to the table where all the monitors that displayed her apartment sat. They're a pair of scissors laid.

Relieved she grabbed them and made her way back to Brad. Just before she dropped to the ground she saw a figure stand upholding an object over their head. It was Charlie holding a tire iron.

"You dumb bastard." He shouted, "I'll teach you to mess with me."

With all the strength she had Lara ran and lunged to scissors into his back.

Charlie screamed and dropped the tire iron. Falling to the ground he grabbed Lara at the knees pulling her down.

"You fucking bitch." Using his weight he rolled on top of her raising his arm to strike.

In his rage, Charlie didn't notice Lara had grabbed the tire iron. As his fist came down she reached up and bashed him in the head causing Charlie to fall to the side. He began to shake like a fish flopping on the ground.

She laid back looking at the ceiling. "Take that asshole."

A hand appeared in front of her face. She grabbed hold and was pulled to her feet. Lara couldn't believe who was standing before her. It was the janitor, Larry Bernard.

Chapter 14

All hell broke loose while Lara hugged Larry. The cops stormed and began to question everyone. Then can the medics and the coroner. Lara got her nose taped temporarily but was told she needed to still go to the hospital. Brad also needed to go to be checked out for a concussion.

Lara kept getting the same questions over and over about the incident. She told all she could but was still hazy from the blows she took from Charlie. She kept watching the medics tend to her boyfriend then would glance at Larry now and then, who was also getting questioned. She had just one question for him. Finally, at one of the breaks she got from answering and medical attention she strolled over and sat down beside him.

"Larry, I don't know how I can thank you." She took his left hand between hers and squeezed it.

"It was… uhhh it was my pleasure. He stared at his lap the whole time.

Lara used her right hand to raise his chin. "What I don't understand is how you knew what was going on?"

Her fingers remained under his chin but he still kept his eyes glancing downwards. "Well, I saw this man. He was ummm… well he was lurking around the schoolyard so I watched him. Then I saw him follow you out of the parking lot. So then I was gonna… I was gonna tell you this morning. But… but then I saw him there again this morning so I just stayed in my car and watched him. I then saw you storm out later and he… well he followed you again so I… I," he took a deep breath. "I followed along too. Then at your apartment, I was gonna go in but felt… I didn't know what to do. I didn't want you mad at me."

Lara smiled. "Why would I get mad at you?

"Well for following. You might think I was weird. Most people already do."

Lara's heart sank. "I don't think you are weird. So how did you get to my mother's?"

"Well, I was about to come in when I saw you leave in a hurry with that other man. You looked so… well so frantic that I followed you again. I'm sorry."

"Oh don't be sorry. You saved me." She stroked his cheek. Larry blushed and hung his head again.

"Hey, you. Look me in the eye."

Larry half glance up, his eyes darting in every direction.

"So was that you in the VW van?"

"Yes… yes it was. I got out and only found that guy you left with. He told me where to take him. So I brought him here. Now he's…. dead. It's all my fault."

"Oh no, Larry. That is not your fault. You did the right thing."

"The ambulance is ready." One of the paramedics said to her.

"Oh Okay." Turning back to Larry. "Thank you again. I am forever grateful."

Lara kissed him on the cheek and got up.

Larry hung his head and rubbed the spot she kissed.

Chapter 15

Lara took a few days of work to recover physically, but mostly emotionally. She still couldn't grasp that her mother orchestrated the plan. Then she also learned through a detailed journal of her deepest thoughts, which the police now have in their possession to help in prosecuting her, that she hired someone to bleed the brakes of her father's car. They were done enough so he could drive in town but would fail at higher speeds. Now she understood how he flipped the car getting off the freeway.

Brad stayed at her house every night so she wouldn't be alone but slept on the couch knowing that intimacy was not what she needed in this vulnerable state. Lara grew to love him more.

She finally returned to work nearly two weeks later. Lara brought a gift for Larry. An engraved plaque that read World's greatest janitor and hero.

"Welcome back Lara," Susan said warmly and extended her arms for a hug.

She returned the gesture and they embraced.

"It is great to be back."

"So how are you feeling?"

Lara smiled gently. "My nose is still a bit sore but I will live. I am seeing a therapist though."

"That is completely understandable. You've been through a lot. Honestly, I am surprised to see you back here so soon."

"I was about to go stir crazy. Right now work might be my best therapy."

"Well, you and Brad should have taken off somewhere. You know a little vacation."

"We plan on it eventually. Right now there is a lot to deal with."

Susan rubbed Lara's shoulder. "Well, I got something to take your mind off it for a moment."

"Oh yeah, and what might that be?"

"Guess who is having an affair?"

Lara just looked at her blankly.

"Well, I won't keep you in suspense. Angie and Steve."

"Oh my God." Lara cupped her hands over her knows. "Ouch!"

"Are you okay?"

Lara laughed hysterically. "I am fine. I can't believe it."

"Well, there is more."

Lara leaned closer in anticipation.

"They played hooky. Both called out. But they were spotted later on at a restaurant by the vice principal who was out having lunch with one of the administrators. So needless to say neither work her anymore. Well, I better get back to work.

Lara just smiled and turned on her computer.

A collection of short stories (fiction)

Love In English Class

 I'll never forget her and the undeniable crush on my eleventh-grade English instructor. Big brown eyes, tight little body, and oh so brilliant. There was something also in the way she moved, her simple act of erasing the chalkboard took me into a fantasy world of ecstasy. It's still hard to believe we defied the odds and ended up together.

 I knew she felt the same way about me as I did for her. Always giving me those seductive looks hoping no other students would notice. We played a cat and mouse game for nearly the entire first semester. I would purposely stay after class with questions that I knew the answers to just so we could be close. She loved the attention I was giving her. I could feel it in the way she would breathe while standing over my shoulder trying to help me. It was going to be tricky though for both of us with her being my teacher and my being a minor.

 Finally, I had decided to make my grade slip low enough so she could tutor me. It was a flawless plan that worked to perfection. When my parents got notice of my failing English they came in and had a parent-teacher conference. I knew for sure that she and I were on the same page when my parents came home and told me she volunteered to tutor me after school.

 Those first meetings were more of the chase. Both of us wanted to bring up the subject but were afraid. Then oh my the third time it all came out and there was no turning back for either of us.

 I showed up at her house at five o'clock like I was supposed to. When she answered the door in that silk robe I knew we would spend the rest of our life together no matter what people might say about our age difference of my being too young to know what love is.

 I didn't even have time to respond to her attire, she pulled me in the house so fast and the next thing I knew our mouths were interlocked and the trading of saliva became fast and furious. The next thing I knew we were laying on the couch where we usually study, she was on top of me and practically ripped the shirt right off my body. She then opened her robe to reveal nothing else but her birthday suit, it was better than I could have ever imagined.

 While she was licking my chest she proceeded to open my pants and pull them down with my underwear all in one motion. When she brought her head back up to start the tongue wrestling again I realized I was inside of her. She began to ride me like a wild stallion she was trying to tame. I could feel her sexuality oozing from her sugar walls.

It became two hours of no talk just action. It was like one of those stories you read about in the penthouse only this was real.

 After the action had ceased and we lied there in our eternal bliss we began to formulate a plan to run off somewhere nobody knew us since it was obvious no one would let us be together here. I know my parents would have exploded and had her arrested and the school would fire her in disgrace. Then, of course, the media would have torn her credibility to shreds and I couldn't let that happen, I was going to protect the woman I love.

 I remembered there was an old abandoned cabin out in the woods near the lake. I had discovered it four years ago while I was camping with my family. Every year we went back ever since it remained the same. I never told my parents about it because that's where I would go to hide when they got on my nerves.

 We decided we could live there for a while and live off her savings. We really wouldn't need much money for we could live off the land. After all, there were fish in the lake and some yummy wild berries that grew all around the area. We would use the money and go into the small town right near for necessities. No one there would recognize us. The town was so small that no one even had cable television just radios.

 Now here it is almost five years later and we are still together and happy as ever.

Right honey. I said right. Well, at least it would have been if you just follow my fantasy you stupid bitch. I guess you just couldn't handle your feeling for me. Now you're mine forever because there is no way the cops will ever find your body. My god, you stink, why don't you ever take shower? Well goodnight my dear, rest in peace.

A Blessing In Disguise

 I looked around the room, nothing seemed unusual but then I caught a glimpse of something through my frosted kitchen window. At first, I thought I was hallucinating from cabin fever, it was the death of one of the worst winters seen here in Eastern Pennsylvania in years. I was also unemployed for nearly two months so I spent most of my days indoors searching the web for jobs with no luck.

 I made my way to the window rubbing my eyes thinking it would wipe this delusion away but it remained. A blue jay was sitting in a tree at the edge of the wooded area behind my house. It was impossible. I still stood for what seemed like forever looking on in amazement. "How could this be?" I thought to myself.

 With the wind chill, the temperature was in the minuses but I was compelled to step outside to take an even closer look. Maybe it was a joke and someone put a stuffed bird in my tree though I could see it moving. Again I thought it was just my mind playing a trick on me. Quickly I grabbed my parka and headed out into the blistering cold.

 I walked as softly as I could so I wouldn't disturb my illusion in the tree but the sound of frozen snow and dead leaves crunched beneath my feet. Much to my surprise when I got to within twenty yards I could still see the bird through m frozen breath rising through the air. At that point, I could also hear it singing away like it was a clear spring day.

 I could feel the numbness set in on my nose and the cold air was making it hard to breathe, but I was mesmerized by the phenomenon before me. All was still and quiet as I just listened to the tune being sung. Then all at once the bird stopped singing and could swear it looked right at me tilting its head before taking off into the woods like a bullet from a gun.

 At that point, I started back for my house for some hot cocoa by the fire while watching a good action movie but after ten steps I stopped. Turning back towards the spot where the bird once sat I again questioned my sanity and wondered if this was all my minds way of dealing with too much isolation. Whatever the case was something compelled me to head into the woods.

 I began my descent into the bare trees trying to avoid loose branches and knocking more snow on my already icy face. Again the only sound was that of the snow crunching and the twigs snapping from the weight of steps. I ventured in for almost five minutes before stopping and think to myself, "what the hell am I doing?" Everything was still and quiet. I had to stop this madness within my imagination. As I turned to go back a sound cut through the heavy air and echoed off the trees shattering the frozen silence like glass.

 Listening intently I again felt more and more of my mind was slipping away for the sound could not be what I thought it was. A woodpecker? There was no way. I cover my nose with my gloved hands and thought to myself. First the blue jay now this.

 Despite the skepticism of my sanity somehow I was compelled to try and follow the sound. I changed directions many times because the sound seems to come from any direction due to it reflecting off the trees. My only option was to try and travel in directions that made the knocking sound louder.

 I had to have been wandering around for nearly half an hour when I almost zoned in on the source of the sound when something at the foot of a tree caught my eyes. At nearly forty feet away it was hard to make out with my vision beginning to be impaired by the weather. It was bright red and looked something like a backpack. As I got closer I noticed movement from the object. I got within yards before I realized it was a child curled into a ball. The red was the jacket he or she was wearing.

 I slowly got up close and knelt, "Excuse me are you alright?"

 A rosy-cheeked little boy looked up at me. He had to be around the age of five and had on a red knit cap the same color as his jacket. The boy just stared and shivered.

 "What's your name?" I said gently so I wouldn't frighten him. Still no reply. "Do you know where your family is?" He remained silent but did acknowledge me by shaking his head side to side.

 "We need to get you outta here." I took off my jacket and wrapped it around the boy and picked him up. I prayed that my thermals and flannel shirt would be enough to keep my going long enough to find his mom or dad, maybe even both.

 He clung so tight around my neck that the hood of his jacket was pressed against my face nearly suffocating me, but with the current conditions, it was a bit of a relief as well. I began my journey not exactly sure of where I was going. Again at the time, I wasn't sure why I didn't just turn back to my home and call the police to take care of it, but something within me kept me going. I stumbled several times tripping on logs because my vision was impaired by the weather and the young lad in my arms. My legs began to feel heavy and I wasn't sure how much strength I had to keep carrying the child.

 Suddenly by the grace of God, I heard voices in the distance shouting something. My adrenaline raced and it felt like I was flying as I picked up speed racing toward the voices.

 "Toby… Toby!!!" I could hear being shouted by two different voices, one was male and the other female.

 A sense of relief washed over me. I then caught a glimpse of a man in a blue ski jacket and a knit cap. "Over here!!" I shouted as I collapsed to my knees.

 "We can't thank you enough for finding our boy." The gentleman said as he handed me a steaming cup of hot chocolate.

 I sipped it not caring how hot it was. "You are welcome. I'm just glad he is alright."

 "By the way I am Darin and this is my wife Charlotte." I exchanged handshakes with both of them.

 "I am Phillip," I replied through chattering teeth.

 "Well thank you again, Phillip. Or do you prefer Phil?" Darin asked.

 "Either one is fine." Still sipping the cocoa.

 "We are so grateful for…" Charlotte began to cry. "I am sorry this is just…" she darted out of the room.

 "It's been hard on both of us. He disappeared this morning while playing outside. My wife feels she's to blame cause she was out there doing some chores and lost sight of him. I tried to tell her it was an honest mistake."

 "I am sure she will feel better now that he has returned." I tried to assure him.

 "Yeah, I am sure she will. So tell me? What were you doing out in the middle of the woods on a day like this."

 "You wouldn't believe me if I told you. Let's just say I am sure God was watching over your boy."

 "I believe you are right." He quickly wiped a tear away. "So what can we do for you? We owe you big time."

 "Forget about it. I am just glad everything worked out." I took a big gulp of the cocoa now that it had cooled a bit. It felt good traveling down my throat.

 "No really. Please let me do something. I have to repay you."

 "Honestly the only thing I need is a job right now. Been unemployed for a couple of months."

 "Well what do you do?" he asked.

 "I am normally a mechanic but at this point, I will do just bout anything."

 "Seriously. You know I own the service station over on Gerard Avenue. You want a job you got it."

 "Oh my God." I could feel a big smile cross my face. "You don't have to."

 "It would be my pleasure. I could use another good mechanic."

 "How do you know I am good?"

 "Well, you certainly got determination, that alone shows great character. Say why don't we get both of you to the hospital to get checked out?"

 As we stepped out the front door I looked up to the sky and said a silent prayer that God was looking out for me and that little boy.

In A Small Town Diner

A man frequented the local diner in his small town diner

Somewhere in California. He went there three to four times a week since his divorce three years ago. Through this time he built up a special friendship with one of the waitresses.

 One day while they were exchanging witty banter he began to see her in a different light. That was when he realized he had feelings for her deeper than customer/server.

 He didn't tell her about his revelation not knowing how she might feel. Since that emotional epiphany, his nerves became shaky like an earthquake when he would visit the establishment.

 He knew from there conversing that she was a single mother of two. He even began to suspect that she might like him as well.

 After a few months of admiring and wondering if he finally got up the nerve to take a chance and ask her out. After all, he had nothing to lose by asking, but by not asking he could lose a second chance at love and happiness.

 He was overwhelmed with shock at her resounding "NO" to the question but was determined not to give up.

 "I thought you were divorced?" He inquired.

 "I am." She replied half-heartedly.

 "Oh. Well, are you currently seeing someone?"

 "No." She replied with a bit of nervousness in her voice.

 "Well, then why won't you go out with me?" Then trying to take the tension out of the conversation said, "Are you washing your hair?"

"No, don't be silly." Sounding a bit agitated. "But let me answer your question with a question."

The look on his face let her know she had his full attention in the matter.

"Why would you want to go out with me?"

That is simple," he stated with enthusiasm. "My heart races every time I see you."

"Oh," was her only reply as she blushed.

"So now tell me, why won't you go out with me?"

"It is complicated." She looked shyly toward the floor.

"Try me," he stated.

"Well," she drew in a deep breath then let it out. "Because my heart races every time I see you."

The lost art of humanity

I stood in a never-ending line of dying humanity. All I could do was watch all the people walking around in their little worlds not giving care to all the troubles around them. This time of year was the worst. It's was Christmas time, a time when we should be coming together as family and friends to help one another in the name of the Lord. No way was that going to happen because everyone was too worried about buying all those fancy gifts like they were buying peoples love and affections.

 I knew right then that something had to be done. I was going to have to make a statement that would help bring people together and it had to be done before Christmas was over. After much contemplation, I decided the best course of action would need to be violent and swift. Something that would force people to take a look at their lives and the lives of everyone around them.

 There were only three weeks until the holiday so I would have to work fast to carry out my plan. What I needed were some guns and I needed them fast. Since there were waiting periods to buy guns these days I knew my only option was going to the local flea market. There you could get some nice weapons that didn't require a background check.

 While at the market I began noticing things that made me realize more and more that something had to be done and knew I was doing the right thing. I saw people walking over a couple of homeless men like they were simply pieces of trash scattered on the ground. Yes sir this was going to have to work for the sake of all.

 I proceeded to pick up a couple of semi-automatics, it cost me quite a bit of money but it would be money well spent by the time I was done. Then I went to the clothing outlet and found a real nice trench coat to conceal the weapons until the moment I unleashed my frustrations upon the world.

 I planned to go to the local mall on Christmas Eve around noon when it should be at its busiest, I figured the more lives I took the bigger the statement it would be. I had only wished I would be around to see how my actions affected the nation but I would have to take my life afterward to put the exclamation point on the situation.

 I went about my business for the next few days. Going to work, hanging out with friends and family knowing it was the last time they would see me. I wanted so bad to tell them and say my last goodbyes there was no way they could know or this would never happen. They would have to read about how I felt in my final letter to the world.

 The morning of Christmas Eve I could feel my heart beating faster as my time to shine was upon me. I called my parents to tell them to never forget how much I loved them.

 "Is everything alright dear?"

 "Yeah, mom just wanted to say that."

 "Your such a sweet boy. Well, see you here for dinner at around five o'clock?"

 "Of course, I wouldn't miss it for the world." That had to be the first time in my life I had lied to my mom I just hope that's not what she remembers after I'm gone.

 As calmly as I could I drove to the mall and found a parking space way out in the middle of nowhere. The walk was long but it gave me time to reflect on my life and what little I did and how insignificant my legacy was. This moment coming would all but make up for that.

 My hands were sweating as I opened the door and walked inside like a normal person coming to buy last-minute gifts. I looked around and realized nobody here knew what was about to hit them. My final stand was here. I thought to myself "Nobody lives forever."

 I was about to pull the guns out and begin my road to glory when out of the corner of my eye an old lady carrying numerous shopping bags caught my attention. She tripped and fell causing her bags to fly everywhere. As she slowly tried to get back to her feet I was watching all those people walking by her and not even lending a hand. I could feel a tear start to roll down my face because I knew that I was definitely about to do my part for humanity.

 "Here let me help you up. Can I carry your bags to your car for you?"

My Eternal Night

This is the vision I see every day through my clouded memory, it crosses reality with regret and what I should have seen coming. For how was to know it would be our last night together. Now all I can do as I look down upon you from heaven, watching you wonder what you meant to me, is cry silent tears.

While my soul soars in heaven my body lies beneath a snowy blanket with my heart burning in a personal hell for never saying the only words you needed to hear.

If only you could hear me one more time I would tell you that "I hold you in sweet bliss with the wings I was given" and most importantly "I love you".

Dying To Live

 Private Ronald Stanley kneels behind the jeep he was riding in moments ago in a convoy that was tracking across the Iraqi desert before their convoy came under attack. Sounds of gunfire and people shouting filled the air. He peered out from behind the jeep assessing the situation. All his Army brothers were all taking position behind their vehicles to take cover and getting ready to return fire.

 Next to him was not only a brother in arms but also his brother from another family. Sam Whitaker joined the service the same time he did nearly two years ago. They didn't know each other before they enlisted. They didn't hit it off right from the start but time, serving together, going through pieces of training, and deploying to the same base in Iraq brought them a friendship that time would not be able to touch.

Ronald flashed back to his time before joining the service. Life was simple. His days were spent working for a janitorial service, though a noble job it was just something to make money for him. Nights were spent going to all the local clubs to have drinks and pick up on ladies hoping to score one-night stands. Whether he scored or not the mornings still left him feeling a vacancy inside.

He knew a big reason for the emptiness was because things were too easy for him, but he was lost on what direction he wanted to take in his life. His dad was constantly pressuring him to join the military just as he had many years ago, but it was not something that caught Ronald's interest until one night he was watching a special on ESPN about Pat Tillman, a football player for the Arizona Cardinals who gave up his football career to serve in the Army after the 9-11 attacks on the United States.

He couldn't pinpoint exactly why it inspired him. He figured it had to be the selflessness of giving up a sports career to defending his country, then his life protecting America's freedoms. Whatever the reason he heard a voice from within saying, "This is your calling."

Ronald was snapped back to reality by the team leader commanding orders to fire. It was hard to see the targets with the sun in his eyes. He aimed in the direction of the enemy fire, aiming for silhouettes on the ridge of the hill. Everything was happening so fast but he could see some of the shadows falling and also heard the cries of his brothers getting shot.

"I can't get the best angle for shots on this side of the jeep!" Sam shouted.

Ronald glanced around. "Here, I will cover you so you can take cover in the ditch over here."

Sam nodded.

"Ready," Ronald aimed and began letting off a round of shots. "Go!"

Sam ran behind him and jumped into the ditch. They glanced at each other then set their sights on the enemy and continued shooting.

It felt like forever but eventually, the firing ceased from the other side. They were then ordered to cease firing. As they waited for their leader to access the situation Ronald took a deep breath. This was his first real combat since joining the Army. He had been through drills, target practice, and patrols but never been under attack or fired at a real person. He had worried about how he would react the first time something like this would happen, wondering if fear would cause him to freeze up.

Though fear did grab a hold of him the moment they came under attack a sense of purpose trumped it with courage.

"Nice work," Sam said.

"You too partner," Ronald replied.

They both smiled.

"We are clear." Their leader exclaimed.

Ronald stood up and Sam hoisted himself out of the ditch.

Suddenly what sounded like a war cry sliced through the desert. Ronald turned to see a man in the distance with a rifle aimed at Sam. In a flash, he stepped in front of his brother, aimed, and fired.

The figure went down. His entire unit ran towards him as Sam screamed, "No!"

Ronald felt numb and hazy. He finally looked down to see a red stain on the chest of his uniform. He looked up then fell to his knees. He felt Sam grab him by the arm as he began to fall backward.

As he lied there looking up at Sam he felt his hand being squeezed. Sam shouted, "Hold on brother. Don't you leave us."

Ronald said his final words then faded away.

Two weeks later at a cemetery in his hometown of San Antonio, Texas his family and friends gathered to pay their last respects. The newspaper and strangers who heard the story call him a hero; his loved ones called him their brave angel.

His unit was the only ones not in attendance because they were still overseas continuing to do their duty in honor of their fallen brother. Sam though had a long talk on the phone with Ronald's father telling every detail from that fateful day and how he is forever indebted to the family for the heroic efforts of their son saving his life.

Kind words were spoken, great stories were told and flowers placed on his grave. When everyone parted to move on with life his parents stayed behind, holding hands while staring at the tombstone. Though they were both filled with the grief they both let out a little smile as they read the final words he spoke to Sam engraved in stone.

It read, "Do not mourn for me. For this will not be the day I die but rather the day I truly lived."

A Devilish Halloween

 It was a dark and stormy night, making it a slow night for trick-or-treaters. I was a bit disappointed because I loved Halloween, especially getting to see all the children in their cute little costumes. The good news was there would be plenty of Three Musketeers, Milky Ways and Snickers left for me and I do love my chocolate.

I decided to pop in one of my favorite scary movies: John Carpenter's Vampires, and settle in for the evening. With a beer in hand I turned out the lights to add to the dark mood, but suddenly I heard a knock at the door.

"Damn! I can't believe kids are still out in this weather." Grumbling to myself as I got up, I grabbed the bowl of mini candy bars and headed to the door. Opening it, I was looking down expecting to see little ghosts and witches awaiting a sugary treat, but much to my surprise, I saw a pair of sexy high heels and the bottom of a red raincoat. Before I could react, the coat was flung open and my eyes began to climb slowly up a pair of the sexiest legs you've ever seen.

As my head rose I noted feminine calves, followed by sexy curves; when I got to the thighs, I knew right away the woman they belonged to. Much to my delight, she was going commando so I could see that well-trimmed pussy. Wanting to take it all in, my gaze continued upward as I admired that tight little tummy and on up to her voluptuous breasts. Finally, my eyes gazed upon that beautiful angelic face that always takes my breath away and I saw she had on devil horns in her wet brunette hair in a way that sent a devilish grin across my face.

"Trick-or-treat." She purred, and her sweet sexy voice washed over me, while she maintained her cute innocent smile.

"Mmmm, maybe I have both," this said while trying to use my sexiest voice.

She gave me a peck on the lips and made her way inside while taking off the raincoat. I glanced around outside to see if anyone was looking. "You read my mind," she said, turning around and handing me her raincoat.

Not wanting any disturbances, I decided to place the bowl of candy outside the door on the off-chance any more kids were braving the storm. At this point, I wouldn't care if they took all the candy because right now there was only one thing on my wicked mind. As I went to place it outside she reached past me and grabbed a couple of pieces.

"You have a sweet tooth tonight hon?" I asked as I placed the bowl outside and shut the door, locking it behind me.

"Not really but I'm guessing you do." With a smile that sent a sensation running down my spine. "Why don't you get undressed and lay on the couch. Just close your eyes and I will show you a trick sure to be pure magic."

Within moments I was naked and flat on my back, eyes sealed tight. I could hear movement and could feel her presence near me.

"I'm ready!!" Even to me, my voice sounded a bit desperate.

"Patience…" Easy for her to say. "Remember good things come to those who wait."

I lay there, so much anticipation building that I began to shake. Suddenly I felt warm lips press on my forehead, then my nose, and chin. I could feel her hair sweeping across me as she made her way down. It was then I knew she was preparing to get in the good old sixty-nine position.

"Now keep your eyes closed until I say," she demanded. Then the kisses continued down my chest and when she reached my stomach I could help but flinch a bit because I am extremely ticklish.

Her hands began to run down my thighs then the greatest sensation of all came over me. She had my entire cock in her mouth sucking hard enough that she took my breath away. With my eyes still shut and my body has frozen in ecstasy, I could smell wet sex and felt little hairs tickling my nose, and my mouth watered with delight.

With no sight, I used my tongue to find her hot lips, already dripping with desire. As my tongue delved inside of her, a sweet familiar taste heightened my senses, it only took a second to discover it was a tiny piece of a Three Musketeer just inside her. I didn't take it right away instead using my tongue I rolled and wiggled it around, and I could feel her quiver in delight and her movement became quicker. Then with one forcefully swipe of my tongue, I retrieved the fluffy goodness covered in the taste of her desire, and she gave out a loud echoing moan. I knew she had orgasmed, it was in the scent and the taste of her on my lips.

Releasing my cock she licked the tip and said, "Ok cowboy, that was your trick now for your treat! But you must keep your eyes closed."

She moved off me for a moment, but then I felt the warm sensation of her hot pussy sliding down on my cock. I reached to grab her hips but she intercepted my hands and held them down tight over my head. I didn't put up much of a fight. As she began to gyrate back and forth, I gave up all resistance and allowed her to do her thing. I've always known her to give me one hell of a ride, but this time it felt different. The way she moved and worked my cock was so much more intense than every thrust forward made every muscle in my body tingle.

Faster and faster she would go, cum running down my legs, my breathing became erratic as her nails dug into my chest and her moans turned into screams.

"Fuck yes, oh fuck yes!!" echoed over and over.

I was nearing my peak and I knew she could sense it as my cock was fully swollen and hard as a steel beam. She leaned forward and laid a passionate kiss on my lips just as I peaked and released.

She kissed my cheek softly then whispered in my ear "Ok open your eyes."

As my eyes opened, they almost popped out of my head in surprise. I looked up to see a blonde woman I've never seen before in a nurse's uniform.

"Who are you?"

The woman stood up straightening her skirt, "I'm Lisa. I work with Tara down at the hospital."

"What I… I don't know what… Ummm." I coughed loudly to clear my throat. "What is going on?"

She pressed her hand against my mouth, "Shhh… she was hoping to end your relationship with a nice memory."

"Really," I replied. "That's one hell of a way to… wait what do you mean to end our relationship?"

Before I finished she was already out the door.

Now some stories from my real life adventures

Proof humanity is still alive

This past Sunday I saw one of the most touching things that nearly made me cry. I was so moved.

 My best friend(whom I call brother) brought his four-year-old daughter(whom I call my niece) to help out serving the homeless. There is this sweet old lady Phyllis who I come there every week.

 She has trouble getting around cause she wears an oxygen tank, and doesn't have much. Well, anyways she was talking to my niece Marlee and found out her birthday was a couple of days away. When she heard this, this woman who as I said practically has nothing reaches into her bag and gives Marlee 2.50 in quarters. There are people out there with millions that wouldn't even think of giving her a dime.

 I was so deeply moved cause her actions go to show that humanity is still alive.

It could only happen to me

 This is unbelievable; I can't believe I just pulled this out from under my car seat. What you may ask? Well, maybe I should go back, starting from the beginning to a little over a year ago where the story begins.

 It all began on a beautiful early September evening in nineteen-ninety, I was simply stopping by a friend's house to say hello but as life sometimes goes those simple things turn into a life-altering event.

 I had known my friend Nikki since elementary school and thought of stopping by and surprise here while in the neighborhood. When I got to Nikki's she introduced me to Tracy, a friend she was spending the day with. Nikki invited me to stay and hang out, with nothing else going on it seemed like a good idea.

 After conversing for a short time we decided to play cards for a while and then we would head to the community pool. While in the middle of poker Nikki's boyfriend, whose name I can't remember now showed up. Now he never really liked me, I think he was jealous of how close Nikki and I were. I believe this led to the argument they got into while Tracy and I continued talking and getting to know one another. I had learned she was a senior in one of the local high schools and was joining the Army after graduation. I by the way was 20 at the time and obviously out of school.

 Finally, Nikki came back to the table and asked if we wouldn't mind maybe taking a walk around the block while she and the jerk talked, now she didn't call him that it's what I call him. I, of course, didn't have a problem with that, after all, it was such a nice evening and Tracy seemed cool so we headed out. This was a pretty large block so the walk took us nearly an hour but it was ok because we were having a good time getting to know each other and joking around that it didn't seem like.

 Once we reached the house Nikki came outside before we even reached the front door. She said that they still needed to talk and asked if I could please take Tracy home for her. I had looked and seen him staring out the window at us: I wanted so badly to go in and tell him off and maybe give him a bloody nose but I respected my friend and just shook my head and told her it wasn't a problem.

 When we got to Tracy's house she invited me in to meet her dad so I figured what the hell. I ended up staying for a while. Before your minds wander nothing happened, it was all just talking. I mean she was nice but I had no deeper interest in her other than that of a friend. When I was ready to leave I figured I would give her my number, I mean what the hell she was pretty cool. Damn the things we eventually regret.

 The very next day the girl was calling me five to six times a day saying things like "I'm on lunch at school and was thinking of you," or "I just got home from school and was thinking of you." She even was calling on her lunches at work and before she went to sleep, boy what I wouldn't have given to have caller ID back then.

 I didn't know what to do at the time, I certainly didn't want to hurt her so I would talk a bit then tell her I had to go figuring she would get the hint and back off, but no such luck. The calling continued for nearly a month almost to the point where I didn't want to answer my phone but I still had a social life that I wouldn't let be interrupted.

 Then one day she had called for the fifth or sixth time. I was busy working on my car at the time so I was able to tell I was busy without telling a little white lie this time. Of course, I didn't tell her to call me later because it was certainly a given she would anyways.

 I had planned that evening to go out to a nightclub that night with my friend Rick and a couple of ladies. While I was finishing up with the car I saw Rick come home from work because he lived around the corner from me. After I had finished, I got showered, changed, and headed to his place where the girls were going to meet us.

 We began to games on the computer while we waited for our dates to show up. The phone rang so Rick answered it. I heard him say, "Yeah he's right here."

 I looked at him puzzled but then he said "it's Nikki." Rick is also good friends with her.

 I said, "Hey Nick what's up?"

 "Just wondering what you were doing?" she replied.

 "I and Rick are just waiting for Bambi and Rachel to show up so we can go dancing." Yes I knew a girl named Bambi and no she wasn't a stripper nor did she ever become one.

 "Well what about Tracy?" she said with a bit of an attitude.

 A bit shocked by the question I stumbled out the words, "What about her?"

 "She says you have a date tonight."

 Man, I just about lost it right there. "OK Nikki," trying to keep me under control, "you tell your psycho friend to stay away from me."

 I went on telling her about all of the calls and told her "I don't care what you tell her, get her to stop bothering me cause If I do it I won't be nice about it."

 Well whatever she said to her, it had worked because I never heard from Tracy again. The next time I talked to Nikki she had told me that she informed Tracy I had gotten back with an ex. She also told me that Tracy was going to go to the Army now so she could stay here with me.

 Now you may think the story would end there because I never heard from her again but once again, in my crazy world that's not my luck.

 Fast forward to the summer of 1991, I was looking for a used car to replace my piece of shit that broke down. Eventually, I found a nineteen'84 Ford Mustang. For the age it was in really great shape, the lady said she was selling it because it was her daughter's, and she had just gone off to college.

 Now like many others out there the first thing I did when getting it home was washed it up real nice, then naturally polished the dashboard and vacuumed it out. While I was vacuuming it out I also checked under the seats to make sure no trash was under there. Not sure why because I have always been one to let the trash pile up in my car, I guess I wanted a fresh start.

 So anyway there I was checking under the driver's seat when what do I pull out, unbelievably it was Tracy's senior class picture. Damn, I mean of all the things I could have pulled out from under that seat, what are the odds of it being a picture of Tracy. I tore that picture up so fast; I should have burned it as well but was afraid she'd appear out of the smoke and ashes. With my crazy life maybe I should have seen it coming but I guess I just never learn.

My battle withndocarditis

When I decided to tell my story of when I came down ill with Endocarditis my first thought was where to start. Then I realized since I was a different person before it happened it was best to tell you about myself before it took place.

 I was very friendly, outgoing and loved to laugh and be silly. I would do or say stupid things to get people to laugh. For the most part, I was energetic, despite having microvalve prolapse, which I was born with.

 Medically I was the person who never got sick, but when I did, whatever I caught never lasted as long as it did with others that caught the illness from. I attribute that to not taking pharmaceuticals when I got things like colds or the flu. I would just ride them out. I believe eventually my immune system became stronger from fighting the bug I caught without medicine.

 My only real medical issue up to that point was occasional migraines due to my microvalve prolapse, and I even learned to control by not get them as often or was able to get rid of them quicker.

That was before… and then…

My first recollection of the events leading up to my heart surgery began when I was on furlough from The Department Of Food And Agriculture in August of 2013.

I got a temp job as a security guard working overnights at a guard shack for a tomato packing plant.

On my third night on the job, I got a sandwich from Subway to take for lunch. I remember eating it and having an awful taste in my mouth. I couldn't even finish it. At that time I just figured I got bad tuna from the place.

I also began to feel a bit off, you know just not normal, well normal for me. I had attributed that to my adjusting to working overnights, something I had never done before.

A couple of weeks later thankfully I was called back to the CDFA. But slowly and surely things gradually began to happen that I brushed off as not being a problem.

I went with some friends to a Black Sabbath concert. At the show, my buddy gave me a playful tap on the side of my ribs. It hurt. Also at the show, I got a piece of pizza that I couldn't finish. Me not finishing pizza, why that is not heard of.

As days went on I was eating less. I didn't have much of an appetite, and when I did the food just didn't taste appealing. Food that got a bit burnt especially made me sick to my stomach, actually just the smell of the burnt food did.

I recall a time in the parking lot at work. I was having coffee waiting for the boss to arrive. A coworker got there shortly after me so we stood and chatted while waiting. He commented to me as to why I was shaking so badly. It wasn't cold out. I just blew it off.

Then while out in an orange tree orchard getting ready to survey it a few of the guys picked up oranges off the ground and pretended to be a baseball pitcher. I picked an orange up to join in, when I threw it, the orange went about two feet. Of course, I figured it was cause I hadn't thrown in a long time and my mechanics were off. The reality of it was I was losing my strength.

There were times when I would go to put a scoop of coffee grounds into my single cup coffee maker, my hand would shake so bad the grounds went everywhere. Of course, I was just oblivious to the fact this was a problem. What was my excuse, I didn't have one other than being in denial.

 I was eventually furloughed from work in November 2013, the season was over. At that point, I began spending most of my time just lying around watching television. On occasion getting up to get on the computer. But as time went on I spent most of it in front of the television.

 The disgusting part I hate to admit was I was only showering maybe once a week. I also began to lose control of my bowel functions and well you can imagine what that leads to.

 As December approached I have also begun to have hallucinations. I thought that the reason my food was tasting bad was that there was an alternate universe in my house and the people in that universe were poisoning my food. I also believed they were using my toilet and leaving feces in there.

Another hallucination I remember having was that my bedroom was a haven; whenever I was in there nothing could harm me. The whole thing is a bit hazy but I do remember thinking there were other people in there with me trying to stay safe.

At the time everything made sense to me. It wasn't till a couple of months after the operation that it all came back to me and I had realized just how out of my mind I was. I now relate my experience to the song "Brain Damage" by Pink Floyd.

Another thing I learned after it was all over was that on Christmas Eve while having dinner at my sister's house I was talking incoherently. Pretty much talking in scattered thought. My sister said it freaked my brother out.

That New Year's Eve was the first and only time I hadn't stayed up to watch the ball drop. I was in bed by ten o'clock cause I didn't have the energy or desire for it.

In fact by that time I was sleeping a lot. I would get up in the morning, watch television for a couple of hours then take a nap. Watch more television and nap, rinse and repeat. You get the point.

I was so skinny that my belt didn't even fit me when using the last hole. Before it had started I was using only the second hole in the belt. My dad kept getting on me to eat. I didn't want to but I managed to take in a bowl of cereal here and there. Again I was still oblivious to the fact that anything was wrong.

Another thing that was happening was my vision was getting pretty bad by mid-December. I could hardly read my computer screen, see the writing on the television, and reading magazines and books was out of the question.

So then on January 10th of 2014, I had woke up from napping for about the third time that day, when I came out of my room my dad told me my best friend Brian was coming over after work. I knew something was up at that point, just wasn't sure what.

When Brian arrived I met him outside. He straight up told me he was taking me to the hospital, the tone of his voice said he wasn't taking no for an answer. So at that point, I just gave in and agreed to go.

I found out later that my dad tried to cash a check I had written him earlier that day to get his car tags renewed. It was so illegible that the bank almost didn't cash it. That is when he called my sister Kim telling her about the check. She then in turn called my friend expressing her concerns. That led to Brian coming over and getting me to go to the hospital.

So he drove me to Doctor's Medical Center in my town of Modesto, California. My only concern going there was the fact that I didn't have insurance. I was thinking they wouldn't even see me once I told them.

They did admit me. So I was laid up in a room while they ran tests trying to figure out what was wrong with me. Their first thought was Tuberculosis. So then I was quarantined in a special room and had to keep a mask over my nose and mouth. That was uncomfortable cause I was burning up and couldn't breathe.

When they ruled out Tuberculosis I was moved to a regular room with a nice gentleman. Don't recall his name now. Meanwhile, the search for my illness went on.

Now, this next part I don't remember at all but was filled in by Brian on the next events. The hospital was having trouble solving my ailment so they brought in a lady from disease control. From what I was told she began asking me questions. Exactly what she was asking me I have no clue. Anyways while talking to me she asked when did I get that infection in my mouth. I replied "What infection?" That is when she told the hospital to check for Endocarditis. And as you already know from my opening paragraph, that is what it was.

What was happening was bacteria got into my bloodstream and was eating one of my heart valves. And the source of the bacteria was my teeth cause I didn't take care of them properly, or go to the dentist when I had a cavity.

So after being diagnosed next came how were they going to treat it. If I had gone to the doctor months earlier when the first signs appeared it could have been treated using just antibiotics. But letting it go so long it had was running ramped in my bloodstream and now eating my valves.

The first step was them have an oral surgeon go in and remove what was left of my teeth and the roots. My first thoughts of course were how attractive will it be to have no teeth, and how the hell will I eat now? All I can remember about that was hearing Journey songs playing as they put me under. When I woke my bite was gone.

Next came the obvious step replacing the infected valve. They scheduled it for three days after the oral surgery on my mouth. By this time I was not just out of my mind by the infection and blood loss. And now the thought of having heart surgery piled on. In a way, the fact that I was in a hazy state kept me a bit on the mellow side. Even still I was a nervous wreck, as I think anyone would be.

Then the next day I was informed they had moved it up a day, which meant the day after it was scheduled they informed me of the change. Now I never asked or was told why they moved it up suddenly, but if I took an educated guess I would say that I was barely hanging on and it was now or never.

So the next morning I was wheeled into an operating room. It was supposed to be about four hours. It was the scariest moment of my life when I was being put under not knowing if it was the last time I would go to sleep.

The next thing I knew I was waking up in a hospital bed still a bit groggy from the anesthesia. At first, I hadn't even thought about the fact I just survived heart surgery so was not rejoicing like I should have been.

I was told that the surgery ended up being over seven hours long. It turned out two of the valves needed to be replaced, not one. Plus they found numerous sisks on my heart they removed. I learned that my father and my best friend stayed in the waiting room and watched football as they waiting to hear news on how the operation went.

The first couple days after the surgery I obviously could do little moving around. They needed two people to put me in a wheelchair to take me to the restroom. One thing I hate feeling was helplessness, and I never felt more helpless than I did right then.

I had always thought that rest was the best way to recover from any illness or surgery. I never got less rest than the couple of weeks that followed my surgery. The nurses were coming in every couple of hours to give me medicines or take blood. Even woke me a couple of times when the monitor detected an irregular heartbeat. I had a hard enough time getting to sleep cause the bed was so small, then add in getting woke all hours of the day and night. Needless to say, I was irritable.

An interesting thing that happened while recovering in the hospital was when I discovered something that was put in my chart. See when the nurses changed over the one leaving would walk the new nurse around and tell her about each patient. Well, one day I had heard my nurse tell the one coming on, "He has a personality disorder." Of course when I heard that I assumed they were talking about the patient next door.

A few days later I heard the nurse leaving say outside my room, "He has a personality disorder." I thought "Nah, they can't be talking bout me."

Then a couple more days later the two nurses were in my room. The one nurse was letting the new nurse about my situation and said, "He has been diagnosed with a personality disorder"

Now I am not one to be offended easily. I could be called an asshole and brush it off. But that was something that struck a nerve with me.

So I interrupted the nurse and said, "Hang on a second. What is this about a personality disorder?"

She replied, "I don't know, I didn't think you had one."

I let her know that I was offended by that and that no one in the hospital is qualified to diagnose that, they are doctors, not psychologists. I also mentioned that no one was with me long enough to even determine that.

She apologized and said she would have it removed from my chart. I said it wasn't her fault and thanked her for removing it.

A couple of months later when I brought up the incident it was brought to my attention that when I went into the hospital I was a bit out of it. That is fair enough, but still whoever did it should have taken into account my situation. And if they thought that then bring in a shrink to determine the diagnoses before putting it on my medical records.

The next issue was insurance to pay for this. As I stated earlier that I didn't have any when I entered the hospital. They filed Medical for me. It was taking a while to get it approved.

I was able to go home a couple of weeks after the surgery; the problem was I needed to keep an IV for another month. That would require a nurse to come every few days to the house and check on me. Without insurance or Medical, there was no way to pay for it. So they were keeping me in the hospital until the Medical came through.

So there I was with nothing to do but watch television with fuzzy reception. The only good thing was that I had a private room so I didn't have to deal with fighting over what to watch. Also, my family brought some of my possessions to the hospital. The most important was my MP3 player, cause I could get lost in the music for a while and block out the noises down the hall.

Another perk I had to bring some comfort was my best friend would bring me a Frappuccino every other day from Starbucks. The only family was aloud so we told them he was my brother. Which was fitting cause he is a brother to me.

My oldest sister Kim and my dad lived in town and made frequent visits to keep me company, which also helped me from going insane. My brother by blood came down from Sacramento for a day to see me. My sister in Alabama flew in for a couple of days as well to see me. She also paid a cleaning service to come to clean my house so when I got home it would be sterilized, which was important in my vulnerable condition. So it goes without saying I had a lot of love and support all around me.

Eventually, the hospital decided to pick up the bill to pay for my in-home visits until my medical went through. I believe they did that because they were in a shortage of rooms for all the patients they had.

Whatever the reason I was finally going home. So on February 10 of 2015, nearly a month after I checked in I was able to leave the hospital a new and healthy man. I got to say it felt more like I was in there for three months. We were having a dry winter till that point. But it was rainy on the day of my release. Which was fitting cause I love the rain.

I now consider January 19th as a second birthday because it was my second chance at life. I really felt reborn, physically and spiritually. Don't get me wrong I always believed in God, I just felt closer to him since I came close to residing in heaven.

There is so much of the story. Some things I left out, some things I forgot. Many others visited me in the hospital, prayed for me, and cared about my well-being. Including all the other people on the writer's site, I am actively involved in. And I truly appreciate all those who showed me love and support during my ordeal. I don't mean to leave anyone out.

I eventually got new glasses and a set of dentures.

So as I wrap this story up there are a couple of questions I thought I'd try and answer in case you are asking them to yourself.

The first one being why did I let it get so bad? Why had I not seen a doctor when it was apparent something was wrong? One thought was something that was brought up to me. Was I wanting to die? That is a fair question. Honestly, I do not know. There is a chance subliminally I was. I had no one special in my life. I was on furlough from my job. Did I have a death wish? I really can't say. I just know that I am now so thankful every day that I am alive.

The other question some of you reading this might ask is why did I decide to tell my story? That can be summed up with a one-word response, awareness. Awareness to the fact that we must listen to our bodies when it is telling us something is wrong. If things seem out of whack in your body go see a doctor. If there isn't anything wrong then you have lost nothing. If there is and don't go it can mean your life.

Also, I wasn't to put out there that there is a connection between your teeth and your heart. I know I had been told that before but didn't believe it. So take it from someone who knows from experience, there is a connection.

I will end this simply by thanking anyone who took the time to read this. I hope you find it helpful in one way or another.

Covid19 story

I was asked by my preacher to tell about when I tested positive for covid19

This is my story

was exposed to it while staying at a nurse and rehab center recovering from a stroke.

I remember leading up to the test that something was going on. I don't remember exactly why but the vibe was different and the staff was acting weird.

Then one day we were told we were being tested for covid. It was after the test that I learned one of the staff had tested positive.

I was on edge and praying while I awaited the results. Three days later I got the news I didn't want to hear. I tested positive. The first thought that went through my head was " I am going to die here."

I remember That I swallowed constantly to see if it hurt and constantly took a deep breath to see if it hurt. I was afraid to fall asleep because I thought I might wake up with worse symptoms.

Also after the test results, I became more isolated than I already was. I and my roommate were not allowed to leave the room. Therapy became bed exercises, We weren't allowed to shower. Every four days we got sponge baths in the bathroom.

It had extended my already long stay to another week, which felt like forever. Then one day I was sitting on the bed staring outside when I heard my name. When I responded the nurse said the words I was waiting to hear for so long," You're going home tomorrow." I was so happy that I called every loved one whose phone number I had. I even called the church and my work. I wanted to climb on the roof and shout it out.

The next day while waiting to be picked up I must have gone through my stuff at least five times to make sure I had everything. I couldn't get out of there fast enough. Before I left the staff wanted to take a picture with me holding a banner with my name on it, which ended up being the wrong name.

Once I got home I was in quarantine for ten days. But it didn't matter because I was home and safe from covid. This is why I am here to tell my story unless I am typing this grom beyond the grave, which I'm not. Like a fairytale, this has a happy ending.

On a side note looking back I had mild symptoms that I didn't know about. Fatigue, I woke up then fell asleep. I thought I was just bored. I also lost my sense of taste and smell which I thought was because my sinuses were clogged because we were allowed to have nasal spray, not even saline solution.

One more thing. No wait, that is all. Oh, wait, God is good.

Just expressing myself

Double Standards

 "He slept with her on the first date, he's so cool." "She slept with him on the first date, man what a slut." The funny thing about those statements is many times they come from the same individual and I simply ask why? Why do we hold different standards for the different genders? I won't say all people do but there is a good portion of Americans that do. Maybe many don't realize it but if they look closely they do. For the record, I believe if you aren't married or in a committed relationship then who and how many you do is your business.

 I once was asking co-workers their thoughts when a topic on the radio got me started, which I will get into in a moment. So when I asked one of the guys why it was ok for men to sleep around and not women he relied upon "Would you marry a woman who has slept with a bunch of guys?" I said yes I would if I loved her and that was her past. Then I asked him if the woman he loved wouldn't marry him cause he slept with a lot of women he said "but it's different." Needless to say, that was a lost cause and no further discussion was needed. I found that he wasn't the only one but no one could ever give a valid reason why that felt that way.

 Now to the incident that had lead to my survey. Whenever I would go to work in the morning I would listen to the local country station which much of the time was talk. Every week after that show "The Bachelor" the on-air personalities would discuss it. I never saw the show once but always knew what was happening. When the show first started and the guy was picking between women they would talk about him making out with all these women like it was such a great thing, which was fine by me. Then the year they had put a woman on the on-air talk changed. One day they were discussing her going into a room with different guys and how she would make out with them. The on-air personality who before when it was a man doing it and had no problem with it called it "gross" and the two other individuals agreed. Once again I ask why?

 Another fine example also comes from the same station. There is a country singer by the name of Andy Griggs who had decided to pose in Playgirl magazine. Now when they had brought it upon the station the radio personalities wished him luck and hoped it did well. Now I know that if it was someone like Shania Twain that would have been posing for Playboy there would have been talking that it wasn't very lady-like and she was hurting country music's image. Actually, a couple years later I was reading an article about a female singer named Terri Clark that was asked to pose n Playboy and didn't do it in fear of the backlash she would have received. Sadly she was more than likely right. Once again I ask why?

 So I don't mind if you disagree with me and believe it isn't right for either gender to be promiscuous or if you agree and believe it to be all right. It's those many out there that hold the different sexes to different standards.

 So I ask you one simple question in closing. Do you hold men and women in different regard? If so then why?

Freedom Of Speech

One of the greatest freedoms we were given when the Constitution was written is the freedom of speech. As Americans, we always want the right to exercise our First Amendment right to free speech.

But what about when we don't agree with what someone else says? What if offends us? One of the biggest problems in this country is that people want their right to free speech but don't want people they don't agree with to be able to express their thoughts.

I believe to be a true American you have to be able to allow others to have the same rights that you believe you are entitled to, even if you don't agree or it offends you.

I certainly don't agree with many people. I think they are closed-minded, ignorant, prejudice, or sexiest in things they may say. I certainly wouldn't tell them not to express their thoughts. I would just exercise my right to tell them how stupid I think they are being.

So if you don't believe all citizens of the United States have the right to freedom of speech then look in the mirror and ask yourself, "Why am I so afraid of ideas and ideals different from mine?"

My latest poems

**Thanks For Chiming In**

***When Mother Nature’s whispers***

***brings the chimes to life***

***serenity fills my heart.***

***that is when my spirit, soul and mind come together***

***in a town called Peace .***

***And that is my favorite place to be.***

**Lost And Found Like A Mystery**

***Words flashes before my eyes.***

***Some make sense,***

***Others just a blur.***

***But they all***

***Make up my mind.***

***I like when they spin***

***Like a carousel***

***Because life is a circus***

***And I want to fit in***

***But hope I am found***

***Like Waldow.***

***Everyone***

***Is a star in the sky***

***On a clear night***

***Beyond the lights***

***Which put me***

***Over the moon***

***While my feet***

***Are firmly planted***

***On the earth.***

***It puts me***

***Lost in the Matrix***

***With the red and blue pill,***

***I decided not to choose.***

**Everything Is Just Ducky**

***The rain is rolling off my back***

***As I waddle on***

***To new adventures.***

***I finally I have everything in a row.***

***Now I can swim on***

***To a clear pond,***

***In spite of the ripples.***

**Her Perfect Paradise**

***Rose petals fall like tears***

***But the flower still stands strong.***

***With this garden***

***As her sanctuary***

***She knows that***

***The sad beauty***

***Will find its purpose***

***Under the sun.***

***The soil continues***

***To be its strength***

***And the sun rays***

***It’s eternal hope.***

***But the rain***

***That comes and goes***

***Is the key***

***To her success.***

***The Garden of Eden***

***May be***

***The first paradise***

***PerfectFor the Gods,***

***But this quaint***

***Little garden***

***Is The perfect***

***Paradise for her.***

**The Artist Of My Life**

***Everyday I wake up***

***I see a blank canvas***

***Before me.***

***God has given me a brush***

***shaped like my heart.***

***Though his art work***

***Is all around me***

***He has left room***

***For me to***

***Paint a picture***

***Anyway I want.***

***Every stroke***

***Is my choice,***

***Every color***

***Is my outlook.***

***God has painted***

***His masterpeice***

***And gave me the tools***

***To create mine.***

***For I am the artist***

**This Is What Happens When You Don’t Say Break a Leg**

***When you pour gasoline on the stage***

***o risk it going up in flames***

***From an actor who thinks***

***He is so hot.***

***But at lest the script***

***Is tucked away***

***In a fire proof safe.***

***But unfortunately***

***It causes the writer***

***To do a rewrite***

***Even though the director***

***Has already interrupted***

***His thoughts.***

***Now the play***

***Will not start on time***

***but the crowd can’t wait.***

***That is when the critic***

***Steps in***

***To give it a good review***

***And makes the theater his.***

**The Love Of My Life**

 ***The love of my life

Is perfect in every way.

Thanks to her

I am never alone.

I have known her

Since I’ve been born

And I have no doubt

I will know her

Until I’m gone.

She knows how to match me

Mood for mood.

She never pass judgment, just reaffirms.

Always in touch

With my feelings,

And lets me into hers.

She confirms my thoughts,

And even makes me

Think deeper.

As our relationship grows

Our cummunication has been

Getting easier to find.

She’s just so

Well rounded,

And so much more.

The love of my life

Is music

To my ears.***

**This Or That Don’t Matter**

***A double edge sword***

***Cuts both ways***

***But the sickle***

***Is only dangerous***

***One way,***

***Still they can both***

***End with the end.***

***So swing***

***The judgement hammer***

***Fall and see***

***Just how effective***

***Your point is.***

***You can bring***

***Your nerves of steel***

***But your ideals***

***Won’t be polished enough***

***To generate interest***

***In the killing fields.***

**Dr. Seuss Vs. The Devil**

***I will fight my Demons
With a skunk.
I will fight my demons
In a trunk.
For I like to fight fire with fire
And lock it away.

I will fight my demons never.
I will fight my demons forever.
Cause without
A war
I will always win.

I will fight my demons
With a clown.
I will fight my demons
Without a town.
For my soul is happy
Defeating them alone.

I will fight my demons
In the day
I will make my demons
Walk away.
Because to see hem go
Makes my spirit***

**The Script has Been Flipped, Amen**

***Shallow waters run deeper
than the early years.

For beauty is more
than
how
It is
define what is on the outside.
The script has been flipped,
now the world is no longer upside down.

Thank god for gravity or we would have-missed out
On the new ideals and standards.
Let us rejoice in
the evolution of mankind
and raise a glass to
the loss of the past.***

**The Man In Black In The Light**

***(Dedicated to Johnny Cash)***

***The legacy***

***Of the man in black***

***Is that he walked the line***

***With his songs***

***And did it his way,***

***Not Sinatra’s.***

***If he didn’t feel it***

***He didn’t sing it.***

***The voice of America***

***And the people***

***That built it.***

***He did it without***

 ***Fences or genres.***

***With integrity***

***In his voice***

***He lit up the stage***

***With just a guitar***

***And his voice.***

***He was a family man,***

***And a man of God***

***Fighting demons***

***That he***

***Eventually defeated.***

***The legend called***

***The man in black***

***May be gone***

***But his legacy***

***Will forever shine***

***In the hearts***

***Of music fans***

***Around the world.***

**My kind Of George**

***George was just an ape***

***That swung with grace***

***But walked with a limp.***

***Other apes teased him***

***By calling him a gimp.***

***They thought George’s***

***Lack of reaction***

***For his given nickname***

***Was just absolutely***

***Without a doubt insane.***

***Bue George didn’t care,***

***He thought they were Bananas***

***As he sipped from a coconut***

***Fin his cabana.***

Metaphorical wit

A laugh is only complete

When accompanied by tears.

The Laugh out louds drown out the sounds

Of a true heartbeat.

Chuckle when you must

But be careful when using it as a weapon,

For if it goes off

Pointing in the wrong direction

The clown will be buried under a tent

Instead of performing in it.

**A Different Kind Of Frankenstein**

***He walks in the night***

***So the light can’t***

***Show him the way.***

***Incognito***

***Is the way to go***

***When fighting evil.***

***He looks into the mirror***

***In order to fight***

***The demons,but not his own***

***He takes faith***

***In his power***

***So his touch***

***Can become***

***Light as a feather.***

***He is thankful***

***That so many***

***Has made him***

***One with himself***

***Because he knows***

***There are strength in numbers.***

***And that is his curse***

***But also his greatest feature.***

**Why I Cannot Be Defined.**

***Wild is the west in my mind.***

***Vivid images In a cage,***

***Yet still running wild.***

***the drinking was real***

***but the gun slinging***

***is just a metaphor.***

***Chasing and roping***

***Just for sport***

***Has a different meaning***

***When the lady is now***

***Happiness,***

***And not just for me.***

***I hope now in my prime***

***I will not be defined***

***From my teenage ways.***

***For yes there is sill***

***An animal inside,***

***B t now it is on the loose***

***And looking to pounce,***

***And play with,***

***The heart of human nature.***

**The Earthly Truth**

***When you captivate***

***An audience of rocks***

***You have polished***

***Your ability***

***To be your true self.***

***That is when***

***Facing the wind***

***Is how you catch your breath***

***And the sun has to put on***

***Its sunglasses.***

***Look at the round of applause***

***From the soil rooting you on***

***Making your Mother Nature so proud***

***That all the flowers***

***Become a bouquet***

***That will never die.***

**Catch A Clique(I Don’t Want to*)***

***I swear it is like***

***An LP skipping.***

***Even if the song***

***Is a classic tune***

***Captain Obvious***

***Broke up a million***

***Decades ago.***

***So donate that record***

***To the Salvation Army,***

***I want to put on***

***Something made***

***For modern times,***

***Like a compact disc.***

**Wood Orchard**

***I see them standing there***

***Naked and bare***

***But filled with***

***Unconditional pride.***

***For they know that their***

***Natural beauty is inside.***

***And though right now***

***They don’t seem like much***

***They know they have***

***To offer  a bunch.***

***This is one of many***

***Reasons why***

***Mother Nature will always***

***Make human beings***

***Give a happy cry.***

**The question Is Weather She Should Be Incognito**

***The Wind sweep across her lips***

***To take off the cherry red.***

***The sandstorm makes a foundation***

***To cover her blemishes***

***And rosey cheeks.***

***The tornado was necessary***

***To curl her hair***

***Because her hairdo***

***Was like plain Jane.***

***Mother Nature***

***Is an expert in beauty,***

***That is why the lady***

***Hides in her salon…***

***Many think she should,***

***Others think it unnecessary.***

***Deceptive Sounds***

***A distant train sounds like***

***An early morning bird.***

***The closer it gets***

***Sounds like a flock***

***Ready to fly south***

***For the winter.***

***Once it passes***

***And the sounds begin to fade***

***You pray for a safe flight.***

***Suddenly the silence***

***Becomes the aftermath***

***Of a dream***

***That could never be.***

**A Poetic Universe**

***For the stars come and go***

***But are always***

***Around us.***

***The sun and moon***

***Work close together***

***To serve a purpose***

***for the mother***

***and her children***

***even though***

***they are far apart.***

***Seasons change***

***But always***

***Remain the same.***

***Animals***

***Are decent,***

***It is humans that belong***

***In a cage.***

***Every race***

***Has a face***

***And the colors***

***Become one.***

***There is a thin line***

***Between love and hate,***

***But it is tall enough***

***To keep them***

***In place.***

***Yes the universe***

***Is a poetic mystery***

***With no reason or rhyme***

***That should be read***

***But never analyzed.***

The primaries of life

***Those red drops***

***That you see***

***That looks like***

***Blood on the pathway***

***Is really***

***The tallow brick road***

***In disguise.***

***If you can endure***

***The journey***

***That long road***

***Takes you on***

***You will find utopia***

***In the form of***

***A blue sky***

***Where black is white***

***And white is black.***

The Value Of A Self Do It Yourself Kit

The do it yourself box you build

So you think outside of it

 Has limitless possibilities.

With no assembly required

The mind is in awe

But its silence

Is more profound

Then anything

Confucius

Can come up with.

The hammer and nails

Work together like

Your ideals and ideas.

And that will make everything

You believe in

Last forever.

Just make sure

To drill the holes

S o that your convictions

Can see the breath

Of all living things

In the atmosphere.

**My Favorite Weather**

***(Weather) it is a drip drop or downpour***

***the earth is in rhythm with my heart.***

***Wet is the world***

***but clean is my soul.***

***Now is the time to pause, rewind and reflect***

***so my spirit can start fresh***

***like the current atmosphere.***

***I can hear it,***

***I can feel it without going outside.***

***As I sit here listening to the harmony outside***

***I can’t help but put to words***

***how I feel about my favorite weather .***

**We All Have Our Own Church**

***Whether we go to the same mass***

***Or stand as one congregation,***

***Even those who worship alone,***

***We all have our own Church.***

***We all have our own prayers,***

***And even when***

***they are the same***

***they come from our own hearts.***

***We have our own talks with God***

***about our hopes, fears and dreams.***

***We have our own sins***

***That we have to pay penance for,***

***And how we do it is up to you.***

***And no matter our religion.***

***If we pray together or on our own,***

***We all have our own hearts,***

***We all have iur own souls,***

***We all have our own Church.***

**Through Stained Glass Sunglasses**

***The colors are vivid,***

***even in the dark.***

***The images are abstract***

***Until you look at the patterns***

***Individually.***

***But even then the beauty***

**Mixed Tape**

***A self-composed requiem***

***Should never be sung alone.***

***It should include a choir,***

***For it isn’t a life***

***If it is sung in one note.***

***You can’t just play***

***The same tune***

***Over and over,***

***Otherwise you’ll end up***

***Falling asleep***

***And end up missing***

***The meaning of the lyrics.***

***So press record***

***On every song you hear***

***And leave a mixed tape***

***At your funeral.***

**I Will Call Her Muse**

***She rubs against your face***

***While purring in your brain.***

***Then She’ll Claw at your chest***

***To let you know***

***She needs to be fed.***

***Sh’ll ignore you***

***No matter how much***

***You want her company.***

***As I pet this cat***

***I will try to come up***

***With a name.***

***Oh wait… I will call her Muse.***

**Poetic Spirit**

***There is an entity***

***In the pen of every poet***

***Around the world.***

***Though never seen***

***It is always felt***

***In the hands of the artist.***

***It is like the poem***

***Writes itself***

***Through the heart***

***Of the poet.***

***There is nothing***

***That can stop***

***This haunting,***

***Which the artist***

***Is grateful for.***

***Because those***

***Haunting words***

***Lets the readers know***

***That they***

***Are not alone.***

**In The Still Of The Night**

***In the still of the night***

***Words have more meaning.***

***For the darkness brings***

***More enlightenment***

***In the form of shadows unseen.***

***For creatures of the night***

***Will show you the way***

***To seek comfort***

***When the sunlight hides.***

***Behold the stars looking***

***Upon you in a group***

***To show you’ll***

***Never be alone.***

***Now you know why***

***The man in the moon is smiling***

***And showing hope***

***Until the sun can rise.***

**The Moon And The Rain.**

***When the man’s lunar light cast its spell across***

***the dreams of millions,***

***that is when hopes and fears***

***buried deep come to life***

***and work themselves out,***

***He just smiles because he knows***

***Everything will be all right.***

***That is why***

***The man in the moon***

***Is a true mystery***

***To those that look***

***Into his eyes.***

***When rain falls***

***It creates a fresh start***

***By washing away everything***

***That plays havoc***

***with your eyes and lungs.***

***When the moon and rain***

***Joins forces***

***You’ll wake up***

***In a whole new world***

***Where your life***

***Has been reset***

***And you are new and improved***

***Even though you are already***

***The best you can be.***

***A Little Ode To Poe And The Lizard King***

***I never Knew how romantic***

***Darkness could be***

***Until I read***

***The pages of Poe***

***Or heard them sung***

***By the lizard king.***

***They broke the barrier***

***By marrying dark and light.***

***They brought the art***

***Of the written word***

***To a hole new creative level***

***That nobody can deny.***

**Misunderstood**

***He stands around listening to conversations with nothing to contribute.***

***He looks around then stares at nothing like he is lost in thought.***

***Or trying to think.***

***Many consider him odd or an idiot,***

***when in reality he is an artist.***

**A Poem Within A Poem**

***Fantasy and reality collide***

***On a blank page***

***When my mind***

***Is hopped***

***Up on creativity juices.***

***When the word starts to free flow***

***Like wine***

***All bets are off***

***When it comes***

***To proper form because***

***Even when my sentences are wrong***

***They are still (write).***

***My wisdom is enlightened***

***No matter the complexity of my subject.***

***I am a genius in my creative world.***

***The beauty lies in the fact that***

***Even when my thoughts are***

***straight forward***

***They could have different meanings to all.***

***And best of all my work is good***

***No matter the opinions of others.***

**Genesis Always Wins**

***Heaven on Earth***

***Is really just hell***

***With the kinks***

***Worked out.***

***The devil is a legend***

***In his mind***

***And a figure***

***Of our imagination,***

***When you see where is tail points***

***You’ll understand.***

***Seasons are his weakness***

***When we let it go***

***Wherever it may roam.***

***Just let freewill be your sidekick***

***And the pitchfork***

***Will become***

***His kryptonite.***

***Then in the end Genesis***

***Will be his demise***

***When heaven and hell collide***

***With love and hate.***

**The Raven Or The crow**

***One chases after***

***The tales of midnight,***

***The other follows***

***The spells of the witching hour,***

***But both do their best work***

***Making shadows in the moonlight.***

***One helps death become a reality***

***To those who are in denial,***

***The other protects life***

***When facing Forces***

***Darker than the night.***

***Though their wings are***

***Of The same color***

***They follow different paths.***

***Their wings may seem Interchangeable***

***To the human eye,***

***Yet neither wants to see the light.***

***When you look into the sky***

***Between sunset and sunrise***

***You’ll wonder on what side***

***Of Eternal life does the bird fly***

***With you in its sight.***

# Ancient Dreams

The pearly gate

I see in my dreams

Has lost its shine.

No effort has been made

To restore them

In the aftermath

Of the wrath

From Imhotep’s rage

Created from the fight

With his only sun.

Peace is a pyramid

That fell out of reach

Of this world.

The planets must align

In order for it

To all make sense,

To see that heaven

Will always be the light

Come dull or shine.

# The Legend Of The Raven And The Rose

Red petals fall to the ground

Like tears from a lady’s cheek.

Wings as black as night

Sours above with a strong presence

With help from clouds in the background.

The petals find life in the comfort of the wind

While causing plight for the wings in flight.

Mother nature takes on a mission

Sent down from above using the fury of a storm.

The petals swept into a graveyard

As the winged creature comes to rest

Upon a tombstone.

Once the aftermath of a hard lesson sinks in,

A raven’s feathers have been laid to rest

Upon a bed of rose petals

Where they both will find peace

Without being buried.

# Write As Rain

When cloud cover reflects

From my eyes

Serenity fills my mind,

Droplets massage my soul

And bad thoughts wash away

Like toxins from the sky.

So let it pour down

Because my spirit

Is being cleansed

As I watch the waterfall

Through the pain.

# humanity Undone

**It is a trick of humanity**

**When a mirror of generosity**

**Is clouded by the smoke**

**Of your true objectives.**

**Asking the neighbors**

**For fertilizer**

**To green the grass**

**Of a stranger’s home**

**Is the real fertilizer**

**In and of itself.**

**How low can you go**

**When you dig a grave**

**To bury the bones**

**Of your true intentions?**

**For six feet under will**

**Never be deep enough**

**To hold all the shame**

**You have given humankind.**

# My Secret To Shining On

When a wall of black,

Built by the tormented

Part of my soul,

Stands in the way of

My piece of mind,

My train of thought

Becomes bits and pieces

Of twisted mental.

That search for inner faith

Can be like

Walking a round blindfolded,

That is when I try to remember

That God is by my side

Even though he cannot be seen either.

And when looking for hope

Becomes like walking around

In the dark without a flashlight

I remind myself

That the heart shines brighter

Than any beacon that could

Guide my ship ashore.

***Senryus and Haikus***

***To April And Beyond***

***So it is said that***

 ***April is Poetry month,***

***But mine goes beyond.***

***Eclipse***

***Every now and then***

***The sun and moon will align***

***To teach the humans.***

***Comet***

***That streak that you see***

***Coming across the dark sky.***

***Is a glimpse at life.***

***Heart like glass***

***Hearts are just like grass,***

***Because they are both walked on***

***And always bounce back.***

***My Tattoos***

***Carved in stone is not***

***As lasting as my tattoos,***

***That’s how I like it.***

***Hummingbird In Heaven***

**\*for my mom)**

***I know in heaven
There’s a hummingbird being
Admired by mom.***

***Window Pane***

***Just tap the window***

***If you want to break the glass***

***The pain is holding.***

***Human seed***

***Warmth brings life anew***

***As wild seeds are brought to life***

***In mom’s shiny womb.***

***Demon’s Nightmare***

***You just need to taunt***

***The demons while you’re asleep,***

***Then you live the dream.***

***A Beautiful sleep***

***I awoke to rain,***

***I fell asleep to the rain,***

***That’s a good night's sleep.***

***Thank YouFor Chiming In***

***My heart is at peace***

***When Mother Nature chimes in.***

***Make yourself at home.***

**As Seen by...**

***Life and poetry***

***Are interpreted different***

***Through different eyes.***

***In the words of Porky Pig “That’s all folks***

***Dedicated to my mom, Rose:***

***Gone from this earth but forever in my heart.***