

## Too Late For Regrets

As she heard his steps in the stairway she started struggling to breathe. Maybe if she pretended to be asleep, if she pretended she couldn't hear him, he would leave her alone. She lay quietly in the bed, her face turned to the wall. As she heard the door to her room open, she was struggling to keep tears from falling from her eyes, a lump was forming in her throat as she felt him lying down in the bed pressed up against her. "Hey Sweetheart, I know you are awake. Aren't you happy to see me?" His hands were running down her side. It was over twenty minutes later, although it had felt like hours. She had pretended it wasn't happening; she was just having bad dreams. "Don't bother running to your mum eh, sweetheart. She will never believe you, it's your fault for teasing me. Pushing yourself on me." He pulled her hair back as he whispered the last part. "If you do dare to say something, I will kill you." As he closed the door behind him, the tears started running freely down her face. She would never let him see her cry. She was not going to let him have the satisfaction.

When she had been eight years old her parents had separated. It had broken her heart, her little brother had been too young to understand what was happening, but she did. Her dad had had enough of her mum, so he left. They had always been arguing, she didn't always understand what about but something to do with the pills her mum had been taking at the time. Sometimes she had been drinking too, and once she had to go to the hospital. Her dad had left a few weeks after her mum had gotten back out of hospital; he had taken her brother with him but left her with their mum. She used to spend every weekend with her dad, but since her mum had found her new boyfriend her dad had stopped coming around. She saw him about once a month, if she was lucky. Most of the time it was just her, her mum and him. She remembered when she was younger and they all used to sit around the breakfast table together. One big, happy family. She let her spoon fall back onto her cereal bowl as her mum looked at her from the counter where she was drinking her coffee. Or what she wanted her to believe was coffee. "You best hurry up and eat or you will be late for school." It made her laugh, her mum's pathetic attempts at pretending to care. "I'm not hungry". "But you are a growing girl, you have to eat." He entered the room just as she had gotten up from her seat. She could feel his prying eyes running down her body, it made her feel sick. She slammed the door shut as she rushed out the backdoor, just in time to hear her mum make her usual comment to her husband. "I don't know why she is so rude to you; you have been a great dad to her." She fought the urge to walk back inside and instead hurried around their house to the front yard making sure she was gone before he left the house and would force her to let him drive her to school.

She didn't go to school that day. To be fair she hadn't gone to school in weeks. She went to the park, where she had found this nice spot where no one could see her. She used to sit there for hours, just look at the squirrels or the people moving past, none of which even noticed her. A lot of the time she would day dream, sometimes she would dream about her dad not having left her behind. That she was living happily with her dad and her brother. She hadn't even seen her brother in a year; she had been told she was a bad influence on him. More like her dad didn't want her brother to know how horrible it was for her to live with their mum. Had to protect the precious little genius after all, don't

want anything to fuck him up, like she was fucked up. Her dad thought she was a horrible teen, her teachers thought she was a troublemaker, the other kids just thought she was weird. She could hear her mum's voice in her head "I don't know where I went wrong with you, I have done everything to make you happy." That wasn't even her favourite part, no that had to be "Why aren't you more like me, I was one of the most popular girls when I was at school." Well of course she was the stupid whore, how can you not be popular when you sleep with any bloke who'd ask her out. She could just imagine her mum dressed up in a short black skirt in the eighties, big hair and loads of make up. Like a prostitute, only her mum was too stupid to charge them. She had gotten pregnant at 16, maybe that was what made her the way she was. Her mum despised her for being born and getting in the way of her life. Maybe it was better for everyone if she just left, and then they could all be happy seeing as everything that ever went wrong was her fault.

She opened her school bag and got a note book and a pen out. She had glued a picture to the first page, it was a family portrait they had done not long after her brother had been born, so she would have been four at the time. They all had looked so happy in that picture, so she had cut herself out of it, that's how it should have been, she shouldn't have been born. She read through the poem she had written the day before, reading each line as she considered if things had been different, maybe she could have become a writer. She had always wanted to be a writer, since she had started school. She used to be quite good at school too, back when she used to care. She sighed as she let the notebook drop to the grass. She couldn't write anything her mind was too messed up, too many thoughts going through her head. She heard her mobile ringing as she put her hands around her legs wrapping them up against her. She felt cold, although the sun was out, to be fair she always felt cold. As the phone started ringing again she lazily picked it up from her pocket. It was her mum. She didn't have time to say hello before her mum started to have a go at her; someone must have phoned her from school. Of course the only reason her mum was upset was she didn't want anyone thinking she was a bad parent. Her mum's voice still rung in her head as she got up and threw her phone out into a little puddle of rainwater not far from where she had been sitting. As she watched the light of her phone die out she picked up her school bag and started walking towards the river.

As she was walking along the river she was watching a couple sitting on the other side having a picnic. The girl was curled up in arms of the man and they were smiling and she had laughed at something he had whispered into her ear. A tiny tear ran down her cheek as she looked at them and felt jealous, it hurt her so much that she couldn't have that. She was sixteen and had never even kissed someone. To be fair who would want to kiss her. She turned her face away from the river as she caught a glimpse of her reflection and kept walking as she stared straight ahead. She hated the way she looked, she was ugly, too much weight in the wrong places, her skin was too pale, her lips too thin, her ankles too thick. She started thinking about her day dreams again. She used to daydream about having a boyfriend. Someone who would tell her how attractive she was, how good her writing was... someone tall, strong... someone who would take her away. It would never happen though, because no one would ever waste any time on her. He had told her that often enough, every night when he would get into her bed. She got angry thinking about

him. Angry and sad; she didn't know what she had done to deserve it. It was her fault though. It was always her fault.

As she was standing on the bridge, once more she let her eyes wander to her reflection on the water. She got two bottles out from her school bag, and then let the bag fall to the river. It made a quiet splash as the half full bag hit the water, before it sank. She opened one of the bottles and let the cork drop to the floor of the bridge, she looked around before opening the other jar. No one could see her as she was standing on the bridge dropping a couple of painkillers into her mouth before she swallowed them with the help of the liquid that was in the bottle she had opened before. She took 20 tablets, maybe more, she had stopped counting. As she stumbled towards the railing of the bridge, the half full bottle of vodka fell onto the bridge and broke. As she felt the water hit her face she woke up for a brief moment then it started getting dark around her as the water was closing in on her. She felt cold; as it went black around her she could no longer feel anything.

“Typical teenagers go wandering off drunk like that. They don't know how good they have it.” As the paramedics closed the black body bag hiding the face of the girl that a young couple had found floating around in the river, the mother of the girl came running towards them. She took one look at her daughters face before she lit her cigarette and turned away. She fell to the ground as she regretted every decision she had ever made, knowing that she would never get her little girl back.