

ANOTHER STORY

RED DEER PUBLIC LIBRARY'S YOUNG ADULT MAGAZINE



SPRING 2022
ISSUE NO. 03

HIGHLIGHTING AB AUTHORS & ARTISTS



WELCOME

to our SPRING 2022 issue!

We are once again excited to share works from our talented young creators. The Spring 2022 issue showcases sunflowers in honour of Ukraine, poetry, and more Central Alberta writing talent. The thoughtfulness and truth of each piece is humbling.

We hope you enjoy our Spring edition of
Another Story.

Claire

CONTACT US

ANOTHER STORY

4818 49th Street, T4N 1T9
Red Deer, Alberta

SUBMISSIONS:

anotherstory@rdpl.org
or visit:
rdpl.org/anotherstory

EDITORIAL

CLAIRE BROWN

Editor-In-Chief

BETHANY MOREAU

Guest Editor

FEATURED CONTRIBUTORS

shanelle felipe
jaime goudreau-riopel
taylor pence
brianne campbell
cadence olbrich
claire stange
emily williamson
bauer bradley
destiny rothenburg
taylor solberg
shyla bell
hunter ledrew
trinity brown
kaeden skinner

SOCIAL MEDIA

TWITTER

[@rdpl](https://twitter.com/rdpl)

INSTAGRAM

[@reddeerpubliclibrary](https://www.instagram.com/reddeerpubliclibrary)

FACEBOOK

[@RedDeerPublicLibrary](https://www.facebook.com/RedDeerPublicLibrary)

A Glass Dagger

Shanelle Felipe 17

Laughter and merriment filled the air as people danced gleefully. Ornate chandeliers decorated with crystals and silver droplets hung from the ceiling as large, golden banners dangled gracefully from wall mount to wall mount. Everything was utterly perfect.

Except Ella wasn't here to dance nor to swoon over some Prince Charming. No, Ella accepted the invitation to the ball for one reason only: kill the prince.

It was not by choice, after all she still had some semblance of morals left and if she could, Ella would rather go back to her provincial life, taking care of her sick father and two sisters. She bit her lip in frustration, if only she hadn't met that dreadful woman but, the rubies she offered were enough to buy medicine for her father and enroll Drew and Annabeth to a respected, finishing school. No need for them to work as a housemaid like Ella, they could be proper young ladies now. A smile tugged at her lips and she leaned slightly against the wall, but her tiny bite of happiness was snatched from her when she felt the curvy bottle of cyanide against the small of her back.

Ella quickly straightened her spine and went to observe the comings and goings of the party. The prince had not arrived yet and an odd mixture of relief and apprehension clenched her heart. Beside her, a young couple twirled each other giddily, sharing sweet nothings and kisses as Ella looked away yearningly.

"Fancy a dance, my lady?" A rich voice uttered behind her, Ella hastily turned back to find a tall noble grinning down at her, like he already expected Ella to say yes. A stab of irritation filled her but most of all: she was perplexed. How could this mysterious man ever think that she was a lady? She looked down in thought and spotted the lacy ruffles of periwinkle dress with diamond and sapphire jewelry adorning her small frame. *Ah*. She thought wryly, *that's why*.

"No." Ella looked up and spoke bluntly. The fact that she had to look up bothered her, Ella was always used to being the leader, the provider and this small loss of power oddly ticked her. She patted her gown and left. She trailed over to the balcony to escape the crowd, and breathe the fresh air.

Midnight black encompassed the entire night sky, with dots of white stars gleaming as slow breezes gently cooled the area. Ella was just about to relax when she felt a presence behind her. Shoulders tensed as the clacking of footsteps made their way to her.

“Running from me and barely even introducing yourself? My, didn’t your mother ever teach you manners.” The man from before asked amusedly, his stygian eyes intensely fixed on Ella. Ella’s fist tightened at the mention of her mother, “My mother is dead.” She replied, wishing he would just go, she didn’t need any distractions that would avert her from her mission. He went quiet, and in a more remorseful tone apologized, “Forgive me, I was insensitive. I too lost my mother at a young age.”

Ella looked up through her lashes, “It’s alright. Perhaps I can belatedly accept your offer to dance now?” She inquired, it’s less suspicious if she was dancing with someone rather than broodily standing in a corner of the room. She quirked her lips up as he nodded and gave her his hand.

Their dance together was long and surprisingly enjoyable, full of quick wits and Ella was glad that her partner and she both were equal in that aspect.

“You intrigue me.” He said lowly so only Ella could hear it.

She swallowed, mouth gone dry. “I’m not that interesting.”

“Funny.” A flicker of a smile, and a gaze that never wavered. “Uninteresting people generally don’t have to say that.”

Ella had to get out - right now. A step closer, and Ella was mesmerized.

“What are you trying so hard to hide?” He murmured in her ear.

Ella bolted from the balcony, her hand near her rapidly beating chest as she tried desperately to control the drumming of her heartbeat. Her breathing came out in sharp, shallow breaths. What had just happened? Why was her heart running so fast?

A loud voice interrupted her musings, “I shall now announce the star of the ball and our crowned heir: Prince Hadrian!” A roar of applause followed his declaration but Ella could only stare as growing horror filled her.

It was the man she was dancing with.



Jaime Goudreau-Riopel₂₃

Override: Rise of the Crimson Hilt

Taylor Pence₂₈

Briar watched her room fill with light. In a matter of hours, Tove would face his greatest fear. The fear she exposed. She re-braided her Dutch side braid. Brown hair mixed with touches of caramel. Dark eyes vibrant against her ivory skin. She pulled on worn leather boots, and a forest green cloak. She slipped a dagger into the belt at her waist. She wasn't a skilled warrior, but having a weapon made her feel safe.

Outside, Briar felt the earth's opposition. The temperature chilled her to the bone. All was silent. Her village void of natural sound. No animals. No people. Nothing. The sky was grey, lifeless. The kind of color that warned people not to test fate, because they would most certainly lose.

Behind the great hall, her heart hammered in her chest. She stared at the wooden dais. A large pyre stood front and center. All executions were held here. Every. Single. One.

People filtered into the clearing.

The voices in Briar's head awakened. Yes, perfect. Perfect. Perfect!

Their excitement made her insides quiver.

Feel the fear. Embrace the fear. They hissed in unison.

She stumbled through the crowd. She had to get away. Had to make the voices stop. The further she walked into the forest the softer the voices became.

Alone, Briar wiped sweat from her brow. Large crowds overwhelmed her. The voices became too loud, too real. Pain. That was the cure. To stand in a crowd like everyone else, she'd bite her tongue or dig her fingernails into her wrist. When her blood shed, the voices faded. Briar didn't know the reason her magic revealed the fears of others to her. For years, she hoped to be chosen for extraction. She'd give anything to be rid of her magic.

A sequence of horns signaled the execution. She needed to be there for Tove. Briar couldn't undo the harm she'd done, but she could face it. She would watch as the life left Tove's body. She would memorize his cries. Maybe next time those memories would make her stronger. Next time she would save a life instead of destroying one.

Briar kept a healthy distance from the crowd. She hovered near the perimeter.

Tied to a pillar in the center of the pyre, Tove's frame looked small. His face shadowed with bruises. Dry blood stained his face like war paint. Even facing death, he looked every part a warrior.

Briar dug her nails into the soft part of her wrist. The voices of fear would not win today. She locked her gaze on Tove as she moved through the crowd.

The Jarl stood proud. "People of Esterlyn." Her eyes shone.

Briar's stomach curled. Revna was a monster.

"I present to you a traitor."

The crowd cheered. Briar dug her nails deep into her arm. Whether out of anger or fear, she didn't know, nor did she care.

"This man." Revna spat into the pyre just missing Tove's boots. "Was aware of a plan that resulted in the escape of four clan members. One of these defectors being his own brother."

Disgruntled murmurs filled the clearing.

As if her gaze called to him, Tove turned toward her.

She expected to find bitterness and anger; instead, she found a mixture of peace and sorrow on his face.

"The sentence for this man is death." The Jarl stooped down and picked up a clay jar. "Tove of Esterlyn. I sentence you to the fate of phoenix flame."

Unlike before, the crowd stood silent.

Briar's breath caught in her throat.

The voices returned with renewed vengeance. Burn, burn, burn! Melt and burn! Death has come!

Briar moaned and bit into her bottom lip. Blood filled her mouth. The voices grew quiet. Tears blurred her vision.

Revna removed the lid from the jar. Flames in various shades of blue and white emerged. The Jarl knelt beside the pyre and poured them inside.

Mesmerized, Briar watched the fire spread.

The flames circled Tove in slow, deliberate motions. Like the fire were alive and stalking its prey. It drew closer, and Tove clamped his mouth shut. His body shook.

Briar couldn't save him from death, but she wouldn't let him suffer alone. She closed her eyes and pushed her magic toward him, it wrapped around him like a cocoon. Her screams mixed with Tove's as the flames devoured his boots, the outer layer of his clothing, and his long, red hair. She felt his skin burn and blister. Please, let it be over. Blackened, the skin curled before melting away. It's too much. The flames stood several feet in the air. She couldn't see Tove anymore. The ringing in her ears blocked all sound. The fire swayed several feet beyond the pyre, as if the flames were searching for someone else to devour. Finding no one, the flames shortened. In moments, the fire turned to embers. Smoke spiraled into the sky. No more heat. The smell of burnt flesh gone. Tove was no more.

Briar, get up." Seethed Jarl Revna.

Briar shook her head. Get up? She cracked her eyes open. She was on the ground. Her hands cut and bleeding. Chunks of soil and grass lay before her. Fellow clansmen and women distanced themselves from where she lay, leaving her alone before the dais. "I said get to your feet." Revna hissed.

Briar got to her feet. Her vision swayed and her stomach fought for relief. “Y-Yes . . . Lady.”

The Jarl strode toward her. “You showed sympathy to a man who betrayed our clan?” Briar lowered her face. “I . . . I”

Crack!

The blow jerked Briar’s body backward. Her knees buckled beneath her.

“No one shows mercy to a traitor. No One!” Screeched the Jarl.

Briar’s arms shook as they held her upper body off the ground. “Tove didn’t deserve to die.”

“What?” Revna’s voice a whisper.

Briar held her hand over the bruise forming on her temple. “He was given the choice to abandon his clan, and he chose to stay.” She kept her eyes at the Jarl’s feet. “There was no honor in his death.”

The Jarl inhaled.

Like the air had been stolen from her lungs, Briar shivered.

“You dare speak of honor to me?” She spat.

Briar pushed herself to her feet. She trembled, but she stood. “Tove served our clan with honor.” Briar’s eyes met the Jarl’s. “The man you should have killed runs free, while one of our own lies in ashes.”

A laugh cut from Revna’s throat. “You’ll regret this display of insolence.” She motioned the Marshall forward. “Take her to the great hall. I’ll deal with her later.”

Yrsa grabbed Briar’s arm. “Yes, my lady.”

Heart pounding in her chest, Briar took a final glimpse at the dais.

The Marshall pushed her forward.

She didn’t know what fate had for her. But for the first time in her life, Briar stood in the middle of a crowd while the voices of fear remained silent.

I Think Therefore I Eat



Brianne Campbell₂₂

A Killer's Confession

Cadence Olbrich 15

"You were referred to me to confess something, correct?" a tall man waltzed in the room, slamming the door behind him with a loud echo.

"Yes,," *it's time to expose the truth.* Just tell it like it is Amy.

"And what is the nature of this confession?"

"Murder sir," hearing this, the man took a seat across the metal table from me. "Of who?" his eyes widened.

"Jack Hunter...my...landlord." The chair screeched like an injured child as the officer stood and left the room, surely locking the door behind him. Now it was completely empty other than the cameras. *Just me and my thoughts. That could be dangerous.* Once again he entered, holding a file and shiny, silver handcuffs.

"Ma'am put your hand on the table please." Slowly, my right hand reached up onto the cold surface. The handcuff made a slight click around my wrist. He placed the other cuff around a bar beside my hand, connected to the table.

"I have Jack's file. He went missing three months ago...and you reported it?" the man seemed confused at this predicament.

"I did, sir. I mean, I was the first to know he was missing," *that crossed a line and I knew it.* At this poorly tasted joke he shook his head. "I guess you don't like dark humor then," *that crossed one too, but to be fair, so did murder.*

"Tell me...how did you know this man? Other than the landlord part."

"Simple. I took a year off university and needed a cheap place to stay. So, then, I lived in his basement suite. We chatted and had some drinks together sometimes." "So you were friends?" he sat once again.

"Not even. Acquaintances really."

"That's all? Nothing...romantic or even-"

"GOD NO! For one I have standards. For second-second is that grammatically correct? Anyway for second he was gay."

"How did you do it? How did you get away with it?"

"Murder is...easy if you have a plan. Like I did. Boy did I have a plan. A damn good one too. I hatched it four months ago in June but put it to action in July."

"Hey Jack, I got some new vodka...you want some?"

"Rough day at work?" I answered his query by popping open the clear bottle. "I'll find something to watch," while he searched Netflix I poured our drinks-although mine was very different from his. I put...bleach in his drinks. Only a little in all of them, so no taste was present.

We both became drunk...so it was...easier to feed the man more until he simply died. Well... simply is not the word. The symptoms started with vomiting...Jack assumed it was the alcohol. Suddenly he collapsed off the couch, nearly hitting his head on the glass coffee table. A haunting expression of pure terror across his face. To this day it appears inside my nightmares. Those wide fish eyes....the open mouth with foam slowly reaching out, trying to find daylight. And the sounds....gasping, gagging and a soft whimper, as if trying to scream...but failing to do such a simple task.

The young officer's face was mortified. *Try seeing that first hand.*

"May I have some water sir?"

"Can you finish first?"

"I am quite parched. You could say-too dehydrated to talk anymore."

"Fine. Enjoy your last glass of water you will ever get outside of bars."

"Way to add in a cheesy line mister," to my own joke I smiled. Giggled even.

Within a few minutes he returned with a white styrofoam cup half full-Beggars can't be choosers.

"As I was saying, he was dead."

I must say seeing Jack actually laying there...the life corroded out of him by a household cleaner....shocked me a little. Those eyes still stared...blankly now-with no soul. In response I sat on the couch and finished the rest of my drink.

Next was the big cleanup. While dragging the empty spirited body behind me, I felt nothing.

Absolutely nothing. No fear, anger, sadness, happiness or not even guilt. I brought him to the garage and set him inside a large clear bin I bought earlier that very day. First I removed those eyes so he could stare no longer. Although, he did but this time with empty sockets. Did you know people with no eyes can still gaze upon their surroundings, following you around the room like the Mona Lisa?

I removed all identification, eyes, face, hands and even hair. That's the moment when it hit me: I killed someone! No-I brutally murdered and mutilated Jack Hunter, devastating his entire family.

I put the-identification in a garbage bag, surrounded by trash. Every week I put a different piece of my landlord in the trash-until he was gone. It took five weeks. Five excruciatingly long weeks.

After all that, I was left with a bin of blood. A lot of blood. Every day I poured some down the toilet. All of that was gone in about a week. A very long week indeed. The next step was to deep clean the entire house using vinegar mixed with dish soap-bleach was too obvious. My clothes just needed a wash with baking soda to get the blood stains out.

I thought of everything. Everything except the guilt. His family, friends and boyfriend all still had hope that Jack was alive- thought he was simply missing. Search crews lost faith in ever finding him. They all deserve to know the truth. The bitter, brutal truth. Tell them all what I did-but spare a few details.

All of this I could have gotten away with, if it wasn't for my conscience. Weeks on end I spent crying, drinking and trying to sleep-but when I close my eyes, Jack's hollow sockets peer back at me.

Make sure no one ever forgives what I did, as long as my lungs are breathing. Lock this criminal in jail, never to see daylight again. I deserve to slowly, painfully fade away-alone. I'm begging you to put me in prison or kill me in this very spot yourself. All of it was a mistake-an unforgivable "oopsie". Planned "oopsie" for that matter. My mother always taught me to take responsibility for my...mistakes-

"So that's what I'm doing here. I killed Jack Hunter and deserve whatever sentence you give me. Preferably A long one."

"Why? Why did you plan this in the first place? What drove you to this madness-enough to kill a living human being?"

A wide smirk stretched across my face, "Some people just drive you completely insane don't they?"

Push and Pull

Claire Stange ²¹

Inspired by Morning, Interior by Maximilien Luce

Sunlight's fingertips stretch into the bedroom below
rays dance across the room
casting a cavernous shadow
where sunlight tries to stretch to
but can't quite reach

The sunlight seems to match my thoughts
the contentment, joy, excitement, happiness
all try to take their place in the spotlight
but the sorrows, grief, loneliness, worry
they want to cast it all into darkness

My days
blend together
all the same
all the time
cyclical

Sunlight wakes me
I throw the limited warmth
of my lumpy cot and thin sleeping bag away
even though
all I want to do is stay

Shirt
Pants
Socks
Right shoe
Left shoe

Then at least
I look ready
to take on the day
even though
my brain is not

For the shadows have claws
and while the sunlight's gentle fingers try to draw me out
the menacing claws sink deep into me
trying to pull me down
trying to convince me to stay

The claws
don't make this menial existence easy
yet every morning
the sunlight's embrace
is enough to get me through another day



From the Cover...Emily Williamson₂₁



Bauer Bradley 16



For Rohan

Destiny Rothenburg ²⁵

Sweet honey child,
Coffee with too much milk,
The sun shines and you glisten, gold in my arms. You, a miracle, born of
cross-continental wishes. You, the last shining star at sunrise.

No, we haven't met yet,
But my heart is open already to the magic
That hangs in your eyelashes
My body, ready to bend and curve for you

You, the grace of your father's collarbone,
The gentle brush of hair on your grandmother's forehead,
The glitter in your auntie's bottled wishes

You are the gift we have always been waiting for

You are my smile in the mirror
And my sleep-breath in the night

When you are born,
A star will explode

Flash Flood

Written in the aftermath of the 2018 Puerto Rico floods

Forgive me, Mother, for I have sinned,
For my skin is salted
For my hair is wet,
Forgive me, Mother, and please take me in your arms

I floated in the water
And that was the first day

I floated in the water
And that was the second day

I floated in the water and
That was the third day

And on the fourth day I cried for help
And no one came

I floated in the water
And that was the fifth day

And on the sixth day
She took me in Her arms
And I went down within her

Mother, lay me to rest,
For I've forgotten how to swim

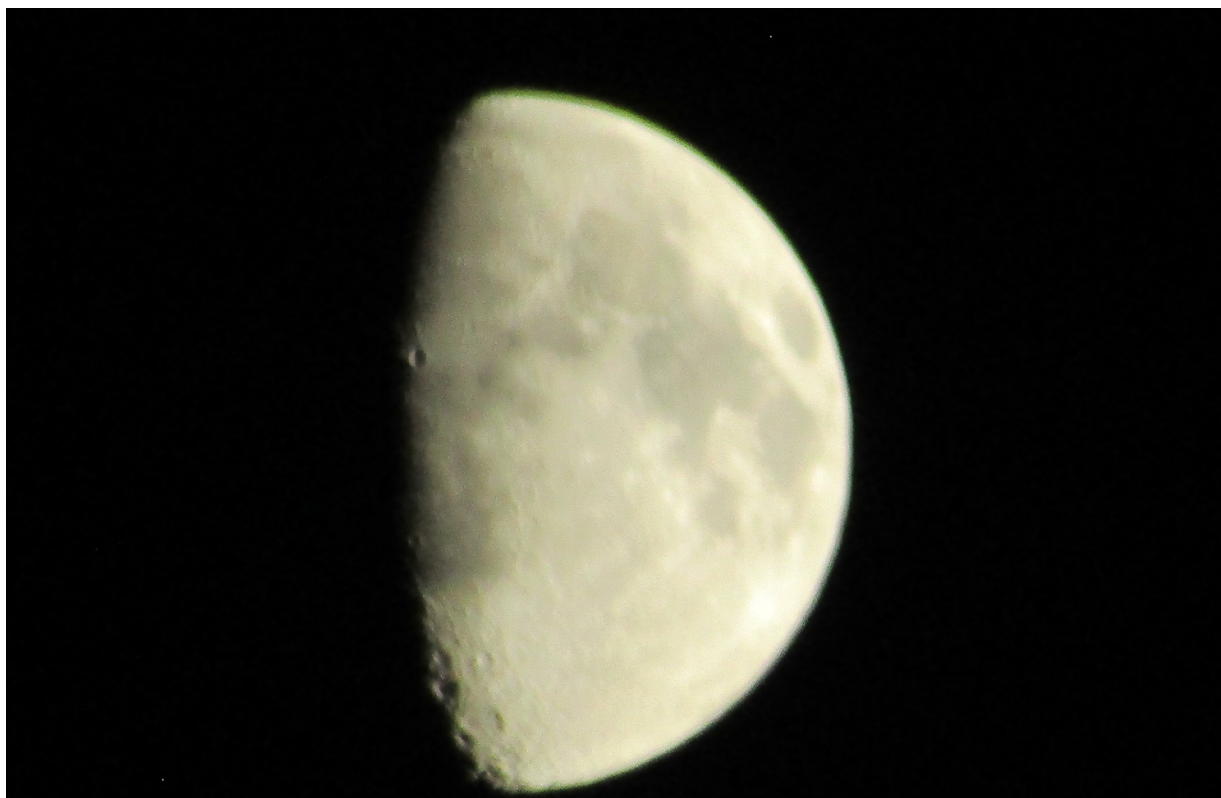
Mother,
They never taught me how to swim
On the seventh day, they closed the borders
And turned out the lights
We, engulfed in the darkness







Shyla Bell₁₇



Hunter LeDrew ₁₇



Today was going to be the best day ever but things happened and it was the worst day of my life. In the morning around 7 a.m. when I got up I went to brush my teeth I saw we were out of toothpaste. I decided to brush my teeth when I got to school so I got dressed and went to the kitchen.

No one was home so I just got my breakfast and left for school. When I got to school I saw some people in black hoodies following me. When I was walking faster they started to run so I grabbed my keys and stuck them in my fingers. As they approached me I told them to stay away from me. When they came closer I stabbed one of them with my keys and ran away. As soon as I got to the school I looked for Elle and told her what happened.

She made sure I was okay but that was just the beginning of my nightmare day. Later that day while I was headed to class the only gang in the school came up to me.

Before I could say something the leader of the gang grabbed my phone. I asked them to give it back, they just laughed. Then when I asked again they pushed me. I got up and tried to grab it back just then, I heard someone say give it back. To my surprise they did and they sped away.

I then remembered that I was on my way to class but there was a large circle around me so I said, "We have class to get to." Everyone was going to class but I stayed put to try and find the person who helped me. There was no one in the hallway at that point so I just went to class.

After school I rushed home to see my cousin but no one was home. *Such a bad day to lose my keys*, I thought to myself. I sat on the porch waiting for 2 hours before I decided to walk to my best friend's house. I started walking to Greta's house. When I got there I knocked on the door, when Greta came out I asked her to stay over. As I asked that question her face glowed, I knew she would say yes. After we finished the movie it was around 6 o'clock so we ordered pizza and put on another movie. Halfway through the movie I asked her, "Why do you live alone?" "Because this way I can choose what my job is. That is why I chose to be a reporter." She explained.

We watched the rest of the movie in silence. After watching *The Meg* we went to bed, I slept on the couch for the night. The next morning I woke up early to write her a note saying thank you, then I left. As soon as I got home I looked for anyone's car and saw my mom's.

The door was unlocked so I went in and went back to sleep before 9, when I had to wake up. At 9 my mom came down and I asked her, "Where is dad?" She pointed to papers, my name was on that paper. I took a closer look at the paper and it said that my dad was in chemo for lung cancer. My mom was leaving to go see him but before she left I asked her if I could stay home. She just nodded so I stayed home in my room.

The next day I snuck out of school to get a gene test. Before I left I told Greta, she said she would cover for me. I bought a gene test and did it right away. It would take 4 hours so I texted Greta to sneak me back in. I got back in class just in time for a pop quiz about the class. Anxiety was creeping up on me. I looked at Greta and she whispered, "We reviewed this a week ago." I just looked forward to it. When the test came I stared at it then started working on it. Half the questions were things I didn't know. I guessed on those questions, I was sure I would fail.

After class I went to my locker for lunch and I saw my dad outside. I grabbed my lunch and went to see him. He came to answer all my questions. My mom told him I knew so I spent my lunch with him asking him questions. When the warning bell rang so I gave him a hug then ran inside for my last class of the day.

During the class my mind wandered, *why did he not tell me* I thought. Then I got called on so I read the board. To my surprise the question was on the board so I said, "5647.67." He looked at me with a smile, I got it right and felt relief for getting it right. That evening during dinner I stared at my mom. When she asked me what was wrong I said, "We should talk alone."

She got up and went to my room so I followed her. "Why did you not tell me about dad?" I asked her. She sighed, "I did not want you to worry but he is almost done with his treatment and now you know. If you knew after his treatment maybe you wouldn't, I don't know, be fine with it." I gave her a hug then went downstairs, leaving her up there alone to calm down.

Once she came down I gave her another hug. When we went back to the kitchen we saw dad had finished his food. He smiled and said, "Look at my two girls." Then I suggested that we should watch a movie. We went to the living room and put on *A Dog's Way Home*. During the movie mom fell asleep then dad fell asleep, so I turned off the TV and went to bed. At about 4 in the morning I heard faint clattering. When I went downstairs with my candle I peered around the corner and it was just my dad. He was making some tea, but there were two cups. Then I heard mom calling for dad and asking for tea.

Before I fell asleep I flashback to when he came to school. The conversation we had, he told me lots of stuff but he also said, "Your mom is considerate but sneaky at times." Then the bell rang so I didn't hear the rest of what he was going to say. I wrote in my journal then went to bed even though my mind was still swarming with thoughts and ideas.

The next morning when I got up I did my morning routine then thought *was dad hinting at something? Or was he trying to make me think like this and manipulate me with thoughts. I should take a break from mystery novels. But was he hinting at something? I will make a secret board and Monitor him just in case.* Then I smirked and went downstairs to mom making eggs and toast." What is the occasion, homemade breakfast day is Sunday and today is Saturday?" I asked. She didn't say anything but she looked at me like she didn't hear me. "Where is dad?" Again there was silence then she said, "Here is your food, eat quickly. Then get ready for school, he is at work." I was quiet and ate my breakfast quickly for school. The school day was normal at least but after school, when I called Greta she was crying. "What's wrong?" She didn't say anything and just kept sobbing. I started walking to her house then she said, "I am not home". I got more worried and stormed into my house. "I am fine. I am in Hawaii. I went this morning." I sighed then I asked, "Why?" She did not respond so I hung up. When I was in my room I wrote *Greta gone* on my notes. Then I remembered that my mom was distant. *Did she force Greta to leave? She was my best friend even though my mom hated her.* That was the only thought that entered my mind. Greta was distant but better than mom. Then it clicked she left right after I did and dad is not home yet. I went to confront her about forcing Greta to leave. She only agreed when dad came home. I told him to file for divorce and he did. I left my mom with one last quote, "Life throws you curveballs but you always find a way around." Then I left.



Kaeden Skinner₁₆





RED DEER
PUBLIC LIBRARY
RED DEER PUBLIC LIBRARY PUBLISHING