



by

e10

I can't remember which of my lives is real any more. They both look just as real as each other, and though at the start I was sure my life with Her was just some recurring dream; I've been living them both for so long now that I'm really not sure any more.

I glance out the window and see buildings and trees rushing by. I must be in the regular life, without Her. But then again my life with Her is beginning to seem much more convincing, because I'm starting to hallucinate in this life; the one that I thought was the real one. I see Her when she's not supposed to be there, leaning on a building or wading through the streets. Then I blink and she's gone.

* * *

Sarah looked down at her blank page, then back across at the handout. *Write a story beginning with "Once upon a time, there lived..."* it stated. She wasn't good at writing; she wasn't creative enough, and she was having difficulty even remembering a fairy tale, let alone writing her own. She groaned in frustration and threw down the pen, resolving to go and watch TV or do something else, but as she put her hands on the desk to stand up, a picture flashed through her head.

Freezing, Sarah wondered what she had seen. It was gone, like a dream, and she couldn't remember what it was, but suddenly she wanted to write. There was an idea somewhere in her head, but she didn't know what it was. Sinking back into the chair, she took up the pen. Without thinking about her story, Sarah began writing:

She stood and went to the front door. It was closed, but not locked. She began descending the stairs, slowly, with a hand on the rail. The steps were cold... Her feet were bare. When She got to the bottom, it began happening again.

* * *

Katherine woke up with a start. She had had a dream, but as soon as her eyes opened it began fading away, and though she grasped at the pictures and thoughts to try and remember what it had been, they drifted away, not wanting to be remembered. Somehow she already knew though – somehow she knew that she had this dream every night. Even though the events in it seemed new to her each time because she always forgot them as soon as she woke, there was always the feeling of *déjà vu*; the knowledge that she had been in that same world before.

Shaking off this strange and sometimes disturbing feeling, she stood and went to the front door. Just as her hand touched the doorknob she blinked, and stopped. *What am I doing?* Katherine asked herself, scratching her head and turning back towards the kitchen. She was still in her nightie.

Preparing her breakfast distracted her from the odd thoughts, and by the time she had finished her coffee her mind was on the day ahead of her, and she went about her normal routine of getting dressed and packing her books happily and energetically. This time when she went to the door, she was fully dressed and prepared for the day. It clicked shut behind her, and her footsteps echoed and faded down the stairs.

* * *

The sun is low in the sky as I arrive home; it seems as if it is floating directly above the end of the street, casting long shadows that seem to point at me. I turn the key and head up the stairs to my apartment, throwing my briefcase on the sofa and heading straight for my workbench. My models are the only reason I come home.

After all, there's little point in coming home, when my entire night's sleep would be spent in another world anyway. My lives are attached to a light switch. As soon as I fall asleep here, I wake in my life with Her, and the instant I drift off there, I wake here.

In the first weeks I went almost insane. I missed days and days of work, I clutched at my hair and saw doctor after doctor (but I didn't mention Her to any of them). My girlfriend at the time, whose face I can't remember, left me. I slept on the street in this life, but after the day in the other, I woke up again on the street, and slowly I realised that my day to day business was continued perfectly normal here and that even though I spent every night in another world, life just went on here. That is, if 'here' is real in the first place. I still can't remember for certain which life is real.

So what I do, is I live my life here perfectly normally; working and paying bills, which, as I discovered, continue to arrive in the mail regardless. I came to realise that the fact that I don't get a wink of sleep as I oscillate between two completely real lives, doesn't mean that I can't still get the most out of this one.

Sitting down, I turn on my bright lamp and check where I was up to on my ship. It is a sailing ship, since the slow and peaceful process of tying the strings to the miniature masts brings me great satisfaction. I only began building models after my other life had begun. I think it's because I like the idea that I could actually use them there. There, I could be the captain of this ship.

* * *

It happened every night. No-one saw though, except once... except him. It was happening as she stepped onto the pavement. She was still asleep, though her eyes were open. It was cold. It was yellow – that was the streetlights. She was walking, slowly, her arms swinging by her sides. The lights above descended down towards her. No... it was the other way around. She ascended up to them. She was soon in darkness, and the cold was receding. It was still there, but she no longer felt it. Her body was still in the light as she walked. Her shadow swung around like the hands of a giant clock lying in the street as she passed streetlight after streetlight. She stepped off the pavement and into the street. Her legs were soon all that remained in the yellow light, and now the shadows were like big stripes of black that whipped around on the road and swept over the facades of the buildings. It had almost finished happening.

* * *

Sarah snapped out of a daze and looked at her work. It was almost a full page and she had no idea what she had written. Blinking, she looked up and shook her head before beginning to read it.

What? she exclaimed to herself at the first sentence. It didn't even begin with 'Once upon a time'. Reading over her own work, Sarah was confused and annoyed. Even she could tell that it sounded awkward and didn't seem at all like a fairytale. Looking at the clock, she grunted in frustration at the fact that she had just spent a half hour writing it. She was about to rip the page in two when her hand shivered and she dropped it back on the desk. Rising, she went to the other room to distract herself and clear her thoughts. Buffy was on.

* * *

It was dark as Katherine got home after an enjoyable afternoon meeting with a few of her best friends. They had had coffee in a café before deciding that they were in a good mood and went to a trendy bar, where some guys tried chatting to them, but girls in groups are too hard to chat up and they failed, the girls giggling as they left, discouraged. One of the guys was actually cute, and Katherine was a bit regretful that they had been mean to them. If she had have been alone she might have talked to him. But then again, if she had have been alone she wouldn't have gone to the bar in the first place. She was thinking about fate and coincidence as she ascended the stairs and slid her key into the lock with a jingle.

Throwing her bag on the floor and coat on the sofa, she kicked off her shoes and tied her hair back before slumping onto the couch to watch TV. Grabbing the control, she jumped as she thought she felt a tingle on her arm, thinking it was a spider, but seeing nothing she assumed it had just imagined it. When she flicked on the television, Katherine stared at it blankly, her mind on the work she had to do that night, before realising she was watching motor racing, and wondered why the TV had turned on with that channel on in the first place. *I never watch the sports channel.*

As she flicked through the other channels to see what was on, she began thinking about her work and realised she shouldn't be wasting the time. Getting up, she went to her desk on the other side of her one-bedroom apartment and sat down, wondering where she had left the handout for her

essay. Katherine glanced over the desk and opened the drawers before pausing. Then she froze. She realised she couldn't remember what essay she needed to write. In fact, she couldn't even think of a subject in which she had to write one, yet something kept telling her to get back to writing it.

Sitting down slowly on the sofa, Katherine sat and racked her brains for ten minutes, trying to remember if she did in fact have an essay due, before the TV slowly distracted her and she began watching something. In minutes though, she was dozing off; her day and her Island Ice Tea both having been long.

She began dreaming again, and in her dream she was also watching TV, though it was something that she didn't normally watch. She was somebody else. She was always somebody else, and it was always the same person. A girl. In her dream, after the programme finished, she stood to get back to her essay.

Katherine was fast asleep on the couch.

* * *

After completing the entire rigging of one mast, I feel satisfied and resolve to go to bed. I don't consider it going to 'sleep' anymore; just 'bed'. I begin to perform the mundane routine of brushing my teeth, the usefulness of which I'm beginning to doubt, since if I'm not in a real world then there's not much use in spending the time and effort to clean teeth that I don't even have.

I'm not in the mood for any philosophical contemplation, and I submit and clean them anyway. Before I go to bed I glance out the window. I see Her sitting on the pavement in the yellow streetlight, leaning back against a building. I turn away, clamping my eyes shut and wincing in pain at the continuing surrealism of this world. When I look back she is gone.

Slightly dejected, I crawl under the covers, but soon my mind is on my model, and my thoughts become happy again as I look forward to seeing it complete. Soon the switch switches and I vanish from this world.

* * *

The familiar jingle wakes me. I must have dozed off. Sitting up, I watch Her come in, and my memories from before I went to sleep come back to me as I conceal myself. It always takes a few seconds to become oriented, because it's not easy to switch from one life to the other.

I hear the dropping of her things and I see the coat land on the sofa. I'm hidden though, and I can't see her. Not that I need to – every line of her face and every curve of her body is imprinted into my memory. I even know all of her clothes. When she gets something new I'll go and investigate while she's out and check the brand and what shop it came from. I'm not obsessed – it's just that there's not much else to do.

I forget what she's wearing today and sidle out to take a peek. Of course... it's the Levi 502 Engineered Bootlegs and my favourite black T-shirt with the V-neck. I live in a real-life *Big Brother*, but I'm the only audience member and I don't get to vote anyone out.

Ducking back behind the vase on her shelf, I brace myself for the loud crash of her mobile phone and keys, which always comes next, and I see her hand swooping towards me and sailing off above after dropping them. I wait a few moments while she's out of the room, and getting curious, I risk the openness by getting up to wander over to the clock that faces the other way. Walking around to the other side of it, I note the time and realise that she'll be back to watch *Neighbours* in several minutes. In fact I hear the thudding of footsteps and have to hop around behind the clock as she swishes back into the room, wafting air over me. I get comfortable against the trendy-looking candleholder that I think was a present from a friend, as she does the same on the sofa.

We watch TV together, laughing out loud because there's no chance she'll hear me.

* * *

After the programme finished, she stood to get back to her essay. Sarah still didn't know what to write, but the urge to write was so strong that when the phone rang and she heard the familiar voice of her best friend on the answering machine asking her to pick up, she ignored it and sat down to work.

Reading over her work once more, she felt compelled to continue it, and pondered as to what could happen next. She suddenly realised that her character didn't even have a name. Crossing out the first word, 'She', Sarah racked her brains and decided upon 'Crystal'. Putting pen to paper, she wrote in the new name. It felt somehow wrong, and when she looked at her page she paused, a look of wonder on her face, because she saw that she had actually written 'She' again.

Sarah crossed out the second 'She', and this time scrawled down her own name. She tested it by reading the first sentence aloud.

"She stood and went to the door."

Gazing into space, Sarah was still wondering if it sounded any good, when she realised that she had written 'She' again. She froze. Something told her that either she wasn't meant to give the character a name, or it was the wrong name.

Shaking her head in confusion, Sarah gave up on the idea of a character name and began to think of a plot. After ten minutes she had a good idea in her head; she would turn her strange piece into a modern-day Little-Red-Riding Hood, and have this girl, whatever her name was, walk along this street at night and visit her Grandmother, who was actually a guy with a rubber face on like in *Mission Impossible*. Sarah couldn't yet think of a reason why the guy would be trying to trick the female character, or why he didn't just knock her over the head instead, but she could come to that later.

Sarah shifted in her seat, adjusted and pulled at her skirt and undid the top button of her shirt, getting comfortable to prepare to write. Despite the fact that what she had already written was strange, very abstract, and didn't fit in with her new plot at all, she continued writing underneath it.

* * *

It was complete, it had happened. Now only her ankles were in the light. She walked. Her feet were silent on the road. She didn't wake at the tickle of trees brushing her thighs. Her face was in darkness, and her body was dull from the lights below, but only her ankles were in the streetlights. What was she wearing? Oh, of course. Her nightie. It swayed with the wind. The night was still cold but she didn't feel it. She waded through the streets. They

came up to her thighs. She was going straight, but the road forked. She didn't follow the road and bumped into the building in the middle. A window smashed far below. Her foot had touched it. It woke her. She didn't know where she was. She turned around and was asleep again. She waded back through the buildings. The streetlights came up to meet her. No... it was the other way around. She came down to meet them. Soon they were above her again. Soon she was at the door. She was back up the stairs. They were cold. She was inside again and the door shut. He wasn't there... yet.

* * *

Katherine awoke from the same dream. She was lying on the couch, and this caused her to instantly forget the girl in the dream and instead glance at the clock on the shelf. Startled, she jumped up. She had slept the whole night and was now late.

Tearing off her pants and shirt, she slapped at the switch on the kettle and threw some cornflakes in a bowl before thundering to her bedroom to turn over her wardrobe for some clothes. *Lucky*, she thought, that no-one was there to watch her racing around in her underwear.

Since she grabbed a skirt instead of pants, she ripped off her socks and then froze, staring at them. They were dirty; absolutely filthy. She peered at them curiously – she had never worn these without shoes anywhere dirty. When she looked closely, she saw tiny twigs and squares of grey newspaper-coloured paper that looked like confetti. The click of the kettle told her that she must have been looking at the socks for several minutes, and she shook her head and resumed racing around getting ready.

Wearing a skirt and a thin top she grabbed her coat from the sofa and slammed the door behind her.

* * *

After *Neighbours* she cooks dinner. In this time I make my way to the coffee table since I want some food too. I will eat from her plate since she will have dinner in front of the TV, then leave the plate on the coffee table, where there is a bowl of sweets that I can always hide under.

I am extremely grateful for the pot-plant, because it has leaves that touch the shelf, the coffee table and the couch, thus providing me with access to all three. I am also lucky that she is not the neatest and most pedantic of people, since there are always books, bags, clothing and shoes that I can climb on to reach various places. The washing stand also is great – when she washes she positions it next to the kitchen bench, and I can always find a path of drying garments that touch each other in order to climb up through her clothes. On the stand she only hangs light clothing like her underwear, which is easy to climb since sometimes there is lace with rungs to hold on to, and often the strap of a brassiere will touch the ground so I can scale the whole thing from bottom to top in one go. From atop the kitchen bench I can access the fruit bowl and cupboards and get a good feast.

The only area really inaccessible is the desk in her bedroom, because it stands alone and has straight metal legs. I got there once because I was in her handbag when she lifted it up, but I took the chance to explore the desk and missed the return journey, and had to make it back down myself.

Tonight she has made vegetables and chicken with gravy, I note as she puts it down on the coffee table in front of me. I am under the sweets bowl in shadow and am not concerned that she will see me. She sits and faces me, though the coffee table is at the height of her knees, seated, and I can't see her face somewhere above as she leans over my hiding place to eat.

She never finishes a meal completely, and when I see her drop the knife and fork on the plate I wait for her to lean back and begin concentrating on the TV so I can get some for myself. In minutes she is absorbed in her show, and I dart out to the plate. My feet are weighed down by gravy but I manage to scoot around, grab a handful of broccoli and tear a shred of chicken, which I plunge in gravy before hopping back over the side. I leave dots of gravy next to the plate as I head for the safety of the bowl. While I'm eating I am cast into shadow and my heart stops as I realise she is over me, but I relax again as I hear the loud rattling of the jellybeans in the bowl above, and soon I see her lean back on the sofa as she puts one in her mouth.

I eat until I am full, and become tired. It will be a while before I can get the chance to get out from under the bowl, so I lean against it and drift off. *Click*, goes the imaginary switch between my two lives.

* * *

Sarah groaned and curled up under the warm covers. Her eyes crept open but closed again and her lips formed a luxurious smile. She clasped her hands together between her legs and enjoyed the warmth.

After lying comfortably in bed for ten minutes Sarah became aware of a wiggling in her hand. At first she thought it was the tickle of pins and needles, so she lazily squeezed her hands with her thighs to smother the feeling, but it persisted and she realised with a shock that there actually was something wriggling in her hand.

With a fright Sarah sat up, simultaneously flinging the offending object onto the sheet. Expecting to see a horrid spider or a cockroach crawling away, her eyes shot to the spot and she froze.

There was nothing. Not breathing, she looked at the sheet and back at her open hand. It had been the most real sensation, yet there had been nothing there. She wiped her palm on her hip as if to smear something off, and swung her legs over the bed to get up.

As she walked to her cupboard, Sarah noticed the pages on her desk. There were dozens, covered in scrawled writing. Puzzled, she went over and looked at them. It was her handwriting. Standing, still in her underwear but frozen to the spot, she began reading.

* * *

It was about to happen. She went to the door, it opened and she went out. The stairs were cold. Outside it was yellow. It was happening. She began walking, and she came up to the streetlights. The night was cold, it was silent. Except for her footsteps. The footpath began complaining. She kept walking, and then she walked onto the road. Soon the streetlights were below her again. Only her legs were in the light. The shadows whipped around her, and the blackness swished over the buildings. No-one ever sees... except once. Except him. She was sleeping, but she saw the stars, except they were below her. No... they weren't stars. She was in the city, you don't see the stars in the city. They were the lights. There was a pole... some kind of sign. She stood on it, and it bent over. Did that wake her? No... not yet. She kept walking. Then there was a car, black and still in the shadows. She didn't see it, and there was a small smash and crunch, and she

looked down. The thing started crying; whining. It's the alarm. It wailed and woke her. She didn't know where she was. She turned around and was walking again. Home. It started happening again. She was asleep again as the lights come up to her. No... she was going down to them. Soon they were above her again and she came to the door. Up the cold stairs, and she will never remember.

* * *

I'm back in the life where I work and make models, and I try chatting to my neighbour in the next cubicle. I forget that the football is even still going. Sometimes I forget everything about this life because sometimes it seems so unimportant. Maybe I am obsessed with Her. I shake my head... I can still lead a normal life in this world. A shadow fills the office and I glance to the window to see what it is and jump. She's there, looking in, her face filling up the entire window. Just as suddenly she is gone. My neighbour asks me what is wrong. I say 'nothing'.

Before morning tea I realise that I have forgotten to pack my lunch, which is strange because I never forget. I'll have to go to the canteen downstairs. When I arrive I find that it is closed; 'broken water pipe' is scribbled on a sign on the shutter. Now I'll have to go across the street and get something from the 7-11 down the road.

It is busy outside in the city. I'm wandering through crowds of businesspeople and shoppers, when something makes me turn around. I stare at the backs of the heads of the people that I just passed, and have the strangest feeling that I saw someone. I shake my head and continue, but I can't stop thinking about it. 7-11 is directly across, and I'm about to step onto the road when a picture of something flashes through my head. I don't know what it is, but my head screams with a sharp pain and my ears are ringing.

Clutching at my head, I wince with the pain and try to cover my ears. The pain and the sound are overwhelming, but soon there is a whining, screeching sound and clanging. I become aware that the pain is receding but the bell-like clanging continues, and I open my eyes. The clanging *is* of bells. I am standing in the middle of the road, and the green nose of a tram looms over me, stationary, the driver ringing the bell at me in anger. I can

see the faces of passengers leaning over to look at me. I realise it had almost run me over.

Confused and slightly dazed, I cross the street and look back at the tram as it starts up and continues on its way. Something makes me stare at the windows at the back, and I am staring until it recedes into the traffic and is obscured. After buying something I can't remember, I go back to work and back up to the office. In my head, I know something is different.

* * *

Since she had dozed off on the couch and overslept, Katherine was hurried and she held the strap of her handbag between her teeth as she whirled her coat over her shoulders and slid an arm into the sleeve as she rushed down the stairs. It was a chilly day as she came out onto the street. The top she had chosen was too thin, and she rubbed her hands over herself to warm up as her heels clicked loudly on the pavement with her fast steps.

When she arrived at the stop at the end of her street Katherine moaned in frustration as she remembered that the pole, on which the timetable should have been, had been bent over and the sign broken. She sat down to wait.

* * *

I was watching the sports channel in the hope that I could see who was winning the football, to be able to chat to my neighbour, when I hear the familiar jingle. I sprint forward and jump on the power button. It doesn't work, and my heart thumps as I try to get a solid footing on the remote control, and stamp down on the button with my foot. I breathe a sigh of relief as the picture snaps up and shrinks into a thin line, the screen going black.

She comes in and I can tell she's been out. She's late, and if she had have been working her steps would have been heavier, but her face seems relaxed and I know she's been out with friends. Sometimes they visit, and then I have to be extra careful since I have to be out of sight of at least two people.

If I'm unlucky enough to be on the shelf when someone comes, I have to be fast and small to not be noticed when a face comes over and casts me into shadow as the friend looks over her things. In fact, I am certain that one time

I was seen by a girl who lifted up the trinket I was hiding in, and I froze with fright as she looked it over, but I'm certain she thought I was part of it. The girl holding me complemented her, and she replied with a polite 'thankyou', but I think she didn't know what the girlfriend was complementing her on... I'm sure it was me though.

I have to duck behind the control as she throws her jacket on the sofa just near me, and I am buffeted by the wave of air. I hear her kick off her shoes, but she doesn't go to the kitchen like she normally does though; I see her face high up over the rim of the remote control, behind which I hide. She is tying her hair back, then she gets taller and bigger as she approaches, and I hold my breath.

I cringe in fright as her thigh rushes past my perch on the arm of the couch, and as she turns I look up at the frightening descent of her backside, casting me in shadow. Not often am I so close to her without cover. I am thrown off balance by the wall of air that hits me as she slumps into the couch, and her hand comes up as she reaches for the remote control. I am clutching at the fabric on the armrest when her arm sweeps over and strikes me, but I lose grip and am taken by her movement, tumbling over and down the slope towards her.

Falling off the arm of the couch, I see a dark crevice below me between her leg and the vertical wall of fabric, and I plummet straight into it. I think she has felt me because she pauses, while I am stuck breathless, wedged against her leg.

I am there for minutes, shocked and praying that she doesn't notice my presence, until she shifts a bit and I fall to the surface of the cushion below. I am now underneath her leg, in a tunnel; the cushion is the ground, the arm of the couch a wall, and her rounded thigh makes both the other wall and ceiling. I am in darkness, though there is a triangle of light ahead of me, where her leg leads off to her bare knee.

It is warm, and becomes hotter. I wait. When she leaves I will run to the other end of the couch and climb the arm to the leaves of the pot-plant, to safety. I wait for a long time, but she doesn't leave. The heat is getting uncomfortable, so I start crawling towards the light ahead. Even if I can't escape there, at least it will be cooler and the air fresher.

Two thirds of the way, my head strikes a lumped protrusion in her leg above me, and I realise that I have come to the seam of her skirt. This is verified as the fabric ends and I feel smooth skin on my back as I continue crawling, though I try not to touch it as I can't let myself tickle her.

Upon reaching the light, I wait and consider my options, before resolving to climb the arm of the chair, because she won't see me if I traverse around to the outer side. After executing this plan, climbing rung after rung of the sofa's fabric, I reach the top of the arm and peer over. She is asleep.

Her head is leaned back, blocking my path to the other side of the couch where the plant is, so I resolve to wait by her jacket until she wakes and then make the return journey to the shelf. She never dozes in front of the TV for more than half an hour or so.

* * *

Sarah was mystified and almost scared. She stood there motionless for almost ten minutes, until she realised she was shivering from the cold. As she tore her glance away from the pile of papers on the desk, she noticed her clock and discovered she was late. She must have been up until the early hours of the morning writing the strange stories. Cursing, she ran to her wardrobe.

After tearing on her skirt, she raced to the kitchen for breakfast and was out the door in a record time, bolting down the street to her stop. Sarah panicked, since her watch told her she was just three minutes late, but as if by destiny, the tram too was late and she arrived at the exact same moment as it did.

Hopping on via the door at the rear of the tram, Sarah grimaced since it was already quite full and she had to remain standing, and she relaxed and prepared for the ride that would take her into the city.

* * *

She appeared in my visions twice more today. I think I'll call them 'visions' because it sounds less insane than 'hallucinations'. Once at the end of the street – she was looking down at the traffic around her feet and was beginning to stoop down to them when I blinked and looked away, and the

other was when her head appeared high behind a building. I looked back to where I was walking, but she didn't disappear, and as I approached the next intersection her body came slowly into full view, then she turned and started walking down the parallel street. I don't know if these visions mean anything. I'm insane enough already.

I turn on my office answering machine and head to the elevator. When I get to the lobby I am surprised to see her foot outside my building. I know it is her foot instantly because it is the right shoe of her black, shiny, high heels. I can't remember the brand off the top of my head. The sight doesn't make me start – I am used to it, just not in this life, that's all.

I am about to shake my head and blink the vision away when I change my mind and keep walking, my eyes on her foot, filling up the entire glass windows of the entrance, since it is a chance for me to determine the realness of these hallucinations. As I approach the rotating door her left foot becomes visible, the heel pressing down on the pavement but her toes out on the road. A van is obscuring my view and I can't tell if cars are stopping around her foot or not.

Her right foot is parallel to the street and completely on the pavement; she must be standing with feet ajar. My heart is pounding with suspense as I push impatiently through the revolving door. I am aware of a black shape moving through my view – it is her left foot sweeping over the cars as she begins to walk. I dive for her right, trying to touch the large pole of her heel to see how insane I actually am, but it takes off and in a split second it is gone, rising up through the air as she steps away.

I look up at the back of the receding legs. I can see high up into the shadows in her skirt; one of my favourites, a short brown one with a slit up the side, from Benetton. She treads in the road and her hips sway, the sky dominated by the bottom of her backside, and her hair far above is swinging as she walks. She pauses and turns, then runs her finger along the top of a building in the next block, which comes to her chest, before lowering herself and sitting on its neighbour, the corner building. She sits with her back straight and crosses her legs. There is a shadow in the triangle where her legs meet her skirt.

This is another chance. I begin running. People are looking strangely at me. I have to stop at the intersection as traffic races by, and I stare at the underside

of her legs where they meet the edge of the building; curving up where it presses on her thighs. After an eternal wait the traffic ceases and I bolt across the road, beating the little green man, and aim for her left foot, which rests between parked cars as her other foot hovers high in the air.

As if beckoning me to follow, though without looking at me or paying any attention to the people at her feet, she stands, and her foot lifts off seconds before I make it. I groan in frustration. Running, I have no chance of keeping up with her casual steps, and when I reach the end of the block she is already stepping over the intersection at the end of the next one. I stare at her as I run and collide with several shouting pedestrians. If only they could see what I see.

She then turns and her full profile comes into view. With a tiny pause it looks as if she is deciding, then her foot goes forward and she turns the corner, disappearing behind the building, her foot rising over the cars the last glimpse that I see. I race to the intersection and look up around the corner expectantly, but see nothing. She is gone.

* * *

Katherine stood and pulled the cord to signal the next stop. She changed trams here, but she had no need to pull it because it was the busiest stop in the city and the driver would be stopping in any case. She was now only a few minutes late.

Descending the steps carefully in her high heels, she looked up to check whether her other tram was there, and sure enough, by a strange coincidence, it was. Hurrying over to it, she hopped on at the rear entrance and stood in the doorway, since it was quite busy. The doors closed behind her, and she felt instantly hot. She undid her jacket and waved a bit of air at herself. In moments the tram arrived at the next stop, and the doors slid open.

“Move back please. Please move away from the doors. Make room at the doors,” pleaded the muffled voice of the driver in the speaker above her, and Katherine shuffled with the other passengers towards the back, then turned to hold the rail. She looked up and paused.

There was a girl. She knew her from somewhere; she could have been an acquaintance whose name she had forgotten. Katherine stared at her, about

to greet her, assuming that they had met, but something stopped her and she stood there, open mouthed and dumb. She felt a strange and almost scary feeling; similar to déjà vu, and Katherine simply stared. She was not alone – the girl stared back, puzzled and strange looks in both their eyes. They knew each other somehow.

This moment seemed to last forever, before suddenly Katherine found herself falling through the air. The girls face rushed towards her as she fell, and they found themselves facing each other, faces only inches apart. Bells were clanging. They were both in a strange dazed trance. The bells continued and they shook themselves out of the daze and realised they were on the floor of the tram, along with several other passengers who hadn't had a good hold when the tram had braked suddenly.

The bells were the sound of the driver ringing angrily. Someone in the tram shouted at someone on the street, who had been in front of the tram and caused them to brake in emergency. Other passengers exclaimed and began complaining, while the two girls faced each other; Katherine lying flat on top of the mysterious girl.

They both came to reality and muttered apologies. They stood and brushing themselves off, still feeling a strange sensation. At the next stop the girl descended the stairs and departed, but she turned and stared when she reached the pavement, a look of puzzlement on her face. Katherine's expression was similar as she stared back until the girl was out of view.

* * *

After running after Her, I am now in the wrong direction to take my train, so I resolve to take the tram home. It would be slightly longer but I couldn't be bothered walking all the way back to the train station.

The trip is slow and boring, but I have a strange feeling that gets stronger as time goes on. I don't see any visions of Her.

When I reach a stop about seven stops before mine, the strange feeling is so strong I have to hold my head in my hands. I begin rocking back and forth and clenching my teeth to make it stop. As the tram begins moving I open my eyes and as I squint through painful eyes I see something that stops me dead.

It is her.

It's not a vision. She's not stepping over cars or sitting on buildings. She's carrying a shopping bag. She is walking on the pavement, and she fits in it. She is a real person.

I jump to my feet and run to the door, but I bang into it like a bird hits a window. The tram is moving, and She recedes. I cling to the glass and press my face as she disappears. Regaining my wits, I tug at the cord to stop, and then again and again, but it only signals the driver once and we continue plodding along. I look for an emergency brake and dart for it but there is a man standing next to it watching my strange behaviour and he saw my eyes on it and catches me around the neck before I can grab it.

After seconds of struggling the tram stops anyway and he pushes me off, to both of our satisfaction, and I begin racing, faster than I've ever run before. She's not in the street ahead of me. She must have turned. Maybe she lives in one of the buildings. I run. When I get to the intersection where I saw her, I skid to a stop with my eyes searching down the street.

Nothing.

I spin around and search in the other direction. Nothing. My heart is still racing, but I begin to feel a panic, as if I have missed an opportunity. I suddenly realise that this is why I had the strange sensation – I was getting nearer to her. Maybe if I get the sensation back, I can know if I am getting closer to her. I begin jogging down the street, pausing every few metres to test if I feel anything.

Nothing. I jog more. In fact I jog more and more and more. I go back along the street and along a side street. I don't feel the sensation at all. It brought me here but now it won't help me find her.

I jog for hours. I scour the whole street and it's neighbouring streets. The parallel streets, the perpendicular streets. Nothing. Finally I rest. I lean against a pole and then see a bus stop. I feel a wave of fatigue over my body and sit. My panting slows until I feel relaxed again, I try to stand but my body says stay. My mind wanders and I drift off. In these final moments before sleep it dawns on me that my hallucinations brought me here.

* * *

Sarah shook her head. Never had she experienced anything so strange. The tram was now obscured in the distance, and she looked at her watch. She was late still but too shaken to rush. Putting her hand on her chest, she rubbed at her heart in anguished confusion.

How did I know her? she asked herself. She had stared at the girl for so long; a strange feeling telling her there was something she should know, something she already knew, about this girl.

Sarah's mind didn't wander from this strange occurrence the entire day. She kept mulling over it until her fantasies combined with the reality of the memory and she could no longer remember which of the events in her head had happened and which she had imagined.

After lunch she sat with her hand in her lap, and when her palm started tickling and she felt wiggling in her closed fingers, she got a shock. Just like that morning, she opened her palm and nothing was there. This was too much for her and she stood and rushed outside, heading home.

This tram ride was uneventful, and by the time she reached her home she was a bit more relaxed, and she slipped out of her skirt tiredly, throwing it on the chair by her desk. Remembering her insane stories, she leaned over and ruffled at them in confusion. Standing in her underwear, Sarah spun her chair around backwards and kneeled on it, resting her arms on the back support, and began reading random extracts.

The wind whipped her nightie. It blew up and out, making her shadow look like a billowing jellyfish. She kept walking, and the cars and streetlights below her disappeared from her view behind the swelling of the light fabric. She was still asleep.

It was more poetic than Sarah could write. She couldn't have written it.

When she walked it looked like she waded through streets, between the buildings. They came only to her knees. Her eyes were closed. Her feet fell silently in the lanes below.

After reading several more paragraphs she found herself sitting down backwards on the chair, her legs spread over the seat and wide around the backrest. She rocked back and forth while her mind swam with the strangeness of her behaviour and her cryptic writings.

Ten minutes later she stood and was about to get into bed, when she noticed one of the sheets on the floor. Without reading it she picked it up and returned it to the top of the pile, bumping her office chair in doing so, and she pushed it in to the desk. Tired and confused, she slipped into bed and rolled over.

* * *

I wake to thundering, and sit up with a start. The sight that greets me is glorious. She races with giant strides through the room in just her underwear. She's wearing her Berlei; I remember climbing up through it just the other day to get to the bench.

Tired and feeling shocked from my rude awakening, I slump back down and doze a bit, trying to orient myself and remember what I was doing before I went to sleep here. It takes a few minutes as my mind wanders, but then it comes back I was trying to get to the shelf because I had got stuck when she knocked me down between the couch and her leg.

Conscious I have to get back to the safety of the shelf, I sit up and glance over at the clock. That can't be right. I look again. I would have been sleeping for... oh God. I slept until morning. My heart starts racing and I know I should have wondered why she was racing around in her underwear.

I jump to my feet, hoping I have enough time to make it across the couch, but I see a tremendous sight in slow motion. The front of her skirt dances with shadows as she strides at full pace towards me momentarily. Instinctively, though not my best option, I dive for the shelter of her coat, which still lies over the arm of the sofa.

I don't remember the next turbulent seconds, but I come back to 'reality' as I am hanging onto some fabric for dear life. Next to me I see a bouncing necklace. Below I see a giant shaking; her breasts heaving from side to side, and the menacing gap between them beckoning me to lose grip and threatening to swallow me. I'm on her collar.

I had never been outside in this life, and the vast space that I see when I dare a glance frightens me; even more the lethal drop to the pavement that rushes beneath the striding feet below. I can't stay here. I'll be seen at best, fall to my death and trampled under her feet at worst, or tumble into the swinging cavern below me and be discovered, somewhere in the middle of the range of possible consequences.

Against the bouncing, I struggle and wedge myself under her collar, pressed against her. I feel relatively secure, but in moments, she must have moved her arms, because the heavy material holding me down lifts away. My grip is broken and I fall. With heart stopped and my stomach in my mouth I fall freely for what seems like an eternity. I spin and my arms flail wildly. I see her chest growing menacingly large, but I am spinning and my vision is filled with sky, and a chin and face floating above.

I fall into shadow and strike.

* * *

Sarah woke from her exhausted dozing. Staring at the ceiling, she contemplated, deep in thought and her mind heavy with worry over the recent events. She lay in bed for fifteen minutes, during which there was another nagging sensation - the feeling that something was about to happen.

Throwing the covers off herself, she lay in her underwear for several more minutes before swinging her legs over the bed and sitting up. She glanced in the direction of the clock, and froze. There was something on the desk sitting in front of the sheet of writing that she had picked from the ground. She knew what it was. It clicked into place. Everything clicked into place, and she suddenly knew what the strange story in her head was.

Standing up quietly, she tiptoed to the desk, the small object falling into her shadow. She knew though, that it wouldn't move. It was shocked. It was shocked because it read her story. Everything had fallen into place for it too. Or should she say... for 'him'

It quivered. He quivered. He rotated, turning around. Sarah looked down at the moving object in front of her hips. Her hand darted out and slammed down over it. She stayed motionless, her other hand still by her side, as she

leaned slightly forward and breathed calm, slow breaths. Her eyes were fixated on her outstretched hand, and cautiously, with suspenseful anticipation, her fingers closed around her catch.

When Sarah's hand was in a ball, her fist fell back to her waist, she breathed, her arm shivering as she knew what she was holding. She felt a tickling in her palm. There was a wriggling in her hand. She had felt it before.

Without her controlling it, Sarah's hand rose slowly past her waist, up to her chest, and stopped at her face. She was quivering, and her fingers trembled as they opened up.

In this second, her eyes focussed in her palm and she took a sharp breath when she saw it.

She had seen him. Her story was complete.

* * *

I feel as if I've blacked out when open my eyes. My world is no longer bouncing, but it still shakes and I hear loud buzzing. A tram. My vision blurred, I can tell only I am in darkness, and I hold my breath in anticipation of where I have landed. The best result I can think of is if I'm in her coat; in a pocket or something.

Rubbing my eyes, I blink several times until they are clear and hold my breath as I look up.

I realise where I have landed. It could be worse. I could be broken on the pavement or smeared under her shoe. Maybe I am, and this sensation is just another hallucination. I get to my knees on the unstable fabric below. I feel walls of soft flesh on either side of my head and I duck back down, not wanting to draw attention.

Dropping back down, I execute a careful roll onto my back so I can look up again. I wedge my feet against the thick, fabric-covered wire of the brassiere to stop myself touching her skin. My feet are bathed in dim light that brightens and shimmers with the gentle wobbling that corresponds to the clacking of tram wheels around me in the distance. Above me, however,

there is a triangular gap and I can see clear sky, that is; a brown ceiling, far enough above me to be a sky. I am conscious of the overwhelming heat.

I am contemplating my next move when my whole world is swung forward and swings back down on me. I bounce out of my safe position and wedge between the walls, suspended in the air. My breathing stops yet my veins are pumped full of adrenaline as I cringe in fright, but she jolts again and I am dislodged, and I strike the comforting fabric.

My arms shoot out and my hands wrap themselves solidly in the lace, and my feet I lock securely back under the large wire. I am on my back again when I look up through the triangle to see sky and buildings towering above, and I realise that she has left the tram, and while doing so has thankfully not noticed me striking her skin. But then again, if she hadn't have left the tram I wouldn't have been tossed against her in the first place. My thoughts are on fate and coincidence as I brace myself for the ordeal of her walking.

* * *

Katherine didn't understand the sensation she felt after her collision with the strange girl. She felt somehow lightened. Not *enlightened* in the Buddhist sense, but as if she had been made lighter by a load being lifted.

Her day was otherwise normal, and as she got distracted by her usual business, the feeling receded and vanished amongst her other thoughts, and by the time she was on the tram home, she could only remember having it.

She went shopping for groceries, and the routine was unusually serene. She now got a feeling, not that she had been relieved of something, but that she had lost something. The cashier didn't look at her. Other people didn't notice her.

Katherine was feeling almost depressed as she walked home. The feeling got stronger as she walked, and when she got to her street it was unbearable. There was a tram stopped a bit further ahead, and she looked at it, though not knowing why. As it began shunting towards her, the feeling reached a peak and she almost wanted to cry. She turned away when it was beside her since it was so strong.

As the sound of the tram's clacking retreated and sunk into the sea of traffic noises, so did her negative feeling, and her heart lost a burden. She spun to look at the tram, but as it slowed at the next stop, she shook her head and turned into her street. Her home being only a few doors up, she was inside in moments.

When she threw her coat on the sofa and dropped her bag, kicking off her shoes and throwing her phone and keys next to the vase on the shelf, she had a new feeling.

She felt alone. She finally was.

* * *

I am back in a tram in moments. She only changed trams.

Walking had been an ordeal. The swinging was sick-making; I would be thrown to one side and the crevice above me would open up wide, bathing me in light, then the walls that made up my prison would come swinging back down and strike me, and I would bounce back upwards when they heaved up in the opposite swing. I had to hold on for dear life, and my arms would shoot with pain as I bounced upwards. I lost my footing more than once, in which case my legs shot up in the air and threatened to make me do a somersault backwards as the light shone down through the opened crevice.

In the distance I hear a muffled voice; ““Move back please. Please move away from the doors...” it reminds me of my other life where I ride trams.

I know that I must escape to a safer location now. I don't know how long this second tram-ride will last. With my first chance I roll over and get on my knees, my head pressed into the lace; away from her skin so she won't feel me, and I edge forward. The material curves upwards, and I climb it, all the while pressing my body into it so as not to touch the skin behind my back. I can feel her breathing; I am carried up and down, and am pushed against the walls of skin as she inhales. I take each opportunity of her breathing out, when the pressure of the walls is taken off my back, to clamber a couple of rungs of lace.

In a couple of seconds I have reached the top of the fabric, as my hand slips over the edge while I climb blindly. I notice as I look out, that I can now see

faint shapes from between the threads of the T-shirt she is wearing. I see another body in front of her.

The light here is dull, and I can make out the material and its contours around me. I turn around and see that behind me the slopes of her chest rise away. I must be half-way up. The triangle of light is so large that it is no longer a triangle, and I can see the top of her head high above. I turn back to the T-shirt and am about to make my move; reaching out to grasp the strands to climb up, when something happens. Suddenly I, we, are falling.

I don't know what happens here. I am tossed, thrown. I strike something, and I'm suddenly in light. I shake my head and try to stand, but I stumble and fall. Kneeling, I draw a deep breath and try to look around.

My situation is disorienting and surreal, but I slowly come to realise where I am. I would have guessed I am back in my prison, but it's different. The walls are there; they slope up on either side of me, but the colour's different. I am in the open, and the fabric overhanging the chest in which I'm standing, is green, and not black. Is this still Her chest? I crane my neck.

Above me is... Her. Her chest. She presses down into the body which I realise I had been looking at through the fabric of Her T-shirt only seconds before. I panic. I have to get back up to Her. I can't lose Her.

Bolting up the slope of this other girl's chest, I have to double back to get over the overhang of the garment she is wearing and my heart races, I cringe at the time I am losing. I am now on top of her chest and Her breasts are only metres away. I feel shaking, and I dive. My hand catches fabric, but the thread slips through my grasp and I tumble onto the soft surface below with a wail of despair. I look up to see Her chest rising up away, high into the air. Then I see her face. She has a strange expression.

My instinct for survival kicks in and I feel the urge to find cover. Before I even need start searching, my eyes fall on a raised part of fabric... a pocket on the chest of the shirt. I dive and pull myself under the material. In seconds my stomach is in my throat as I am inverted and fall to the bottom of the pocket. The girl has stood up.

As I hear voices apologising above the reality hits me. I have lost Her.

* * *

Katherine heard the rain as she began preparing for bed. After taking off her bra she changes into a pair of comfortable black underwear before slipping into her nightie. As she crawled under the covers she saw the dirty socks, and wondered how they got dirty.

Outside the rain is washing the streets clean.

* * *

I am in despair as I tumble back and forth. The girl is walking. I huddle into the foetal position under the fabric and close my eyes as I hurtle around, my emotional pain overwhelming the beating my body is taken as I am thrown against the breast on the other side of the fabric. I don't know the clothing I am lying in. I don't know its owner.

The day is a blur. After the turbulence stops there are muffled voices for a few hours but I don't pay attention. I hear the clinking of cutlery, and soon after the bouncing begins again. I am curled up when the noise of traffic disappears and a door slams shut. I sit up to attention and brace myself with my arms. The girl is home.

With no warning my breath is knocked from my body as I am thrown up in the air. I am pinned to the fabric inside the pocket in a giant violent movement, before it slaps against something and the resumption of gravity tells me I am upside down. I claw and grab at the material but it is useless and I fall from the pocket.

I strike the ground with a grunt of pain, but it is soft and I realise that I am not hurt. When I look up my breath is taken away by the sight.

Towering over me is the girl. Clothed only in her underwear, her crotch casts me in shadow; through her legs I can see the rings of a hidden light bulb on the ceiling far away, and her face looms high above past the chest that had been my prison, now clad only in a silver brassiere.

I lay frozen, but take in my surroundings. We are in her room. I realise I am on an office chair facing her. The backrest towers behind me and I realise she has thrown her skirt, me along with it, over the backrest and she is now

gazing at something behind it. Turning my head backwards I see the legs of a desk and understand she is reading something on it.

When I turn back I get a shock as I see movement of the huge legs. A knee rises over the horizon of the seat and floats towards me. My heart stops. It thunders down on my left, and causes a depression in the cushion, and I begin rolling to it. When I clutch at the fabric and stop myself, the other knee is on the other side; she is kneeling on the office chair.

I gulp as I now stare directly upwards at her crotch from between her knees. I back away, but there is nowhere to go. The seat drops away behind me. I am cast into light as the bulb now shines down through her legs onto me.

I stand frozen, undecided and optionless for minutes. I have nowhere to jump down to. I am running helplessly back and forth along the edge when I am shaken by movement. I look up to see her legs spreading further; her knee is slipping off and over and the other follows suit. My heart races in panic as her body now descends towards me – she is going to sit down on the chair on which I am trapped.

I dive onto my face and cover my head, gritting my teeth and waiting for the worst. The shaking of my perch ceases and I open my eyes. I look to my side and see shadow. It is the shadow under her leg. Turning over in suspense I see a wall of silver fabric rising over me and her other leg on my other side. I gasp in shock and relief. I am unharmed, but I am lying trapped almost fully underneath this girl. My head hangs over the edge under the backrest, but my feet are pressed down by the fabric of her underwear.

Peering upwards I see the underside of her chest squashed against the back support of the office chair, and I see that she is sitting backwards on the chair and leaning forwards on the backrest. I stay motionless, waiting for my fate to be decided, for ten minutes.

Suddenly there is further movement. Light shines down as she leans back and the walls of my prison open slightly. I pray that she doesn't look down, and I stare upwards expectantly. In doing so, however, she brushes her skirt, which still drapes over the backrest, and it dangles down closer to me. This is my chance. I jump to my knees, stooping so as not to touch her abdomen, and spring upwards, catching the collar. I pull myself into the folds her skirt and wait.

From beneath the fabric in which I am concealed I see her leg straighten as she stands, then she moves away, but before disappearing I see her arm reach for something on the ground beneath the chair. Her hand holds a sheet of paper, and I am jolted as she bumps the chair in putting it on the table. I suddenly swing around violently and I realise that she is pushing the chair into the desk.

I wait patiently as I hear rustling of fabric, and then the repetitive, slow breathing of sleep, before I begin climbing. I swing onto the outside of the garment and in seconds I am on the desk. I am looking around and considering my options when I glance at the paper she had picked up. Curiosity taking over me, despite knowing full well the negative results it has for our feline counterparts, and I walk over it and begin reading.

* * *

She felt alone. Then it happened again. No-one ever saw though... except once, except him... except tonight. He had been searching for her. It was raining. Her feet were cold as they touched the pavement, but soon she didn't feel it. Soon she was above the lights, and the cold no longer touched her. She wasn't above the rain though, and it struck her. At first it was droplets, but soon, when the lights were around her ankles far below, she couldn't feel the droplets anymore and it was a film of wetness; penetrating and enveloping. She was sopping. It ran down her breasts. Her nightie stuck to her body like skin. Her black underwear was clear underneath the skin of fabric. The water ran down her legs. That's what she looked like when he saw her. At first he only saw her head and chest high above the buildings, a dull outline, dim in the light. Then he ran. She walked and he ran to her, and when he came to her street he saw her completely. She walked towards him, not seeing him. She was asleep still. He saw her ankles; yellow in the light. They shone in the wet. He saw her legs, glowing a dull yellow behind the sheets of water between them. They rose upwards. There was shadow in her crotch... a black wall with the wet white fabric clinging to it. Her chest heaved as she walked. Her hair, sopping, clung to her shoulders. He was fixated. He didn't move, even as her foot rose over him. He stared up at it. It came down to him and knocked him over. He was on his feet and continued staring up into the shadow at the back of her legs as she stepped over him. She stopped though. She knew someone was watching, but she was still asleep. She turned slowly. Her head hung forward as she stared down, eyes

glazed. He was between her feet. He was buffeted in waves of water falling from her. He was waving. Normally he didn't want to be seen, but now he wanted her back. Now he wanted her to see him. She stared at him. Slowly she bent over. The streetlights came up to her, but she wasn't getting smaller. Her arm went for him. He stopped waving and stayed still. He fell into shadow under her hand. Her fingers began closing around him. He disappeared into her fist. She stood. The streetlights fell away again. She turned back, and she began walking again. There was a wriggling in her hand. She could feel it. He was wet and she could feel him tickling inside her palm. She paused, and her fist rose and turned. Her hand was at her waist as her fingers opened. She stared down at him. He was in her palm and was washed by water that fell from her chest. She no longer felt alone, and her hand closed over him as she began walking. Soon it was happening again. The lights ascended to her. No... she was descending to them. This time so was he. He is stuck in her fingers. When it finished happening, she still felt the wriggling in her hand. She was going up the stairs, and the wriggling continued. Her palm tickled when she went inside, and when she dropped back into her bed. Only when she was safe in her bed with hands under the covers did she open up her fingers. That's how it happened to him. She was no longer alone.

* * *

I am stunned. It is complete. Everything is in its place.

I sit in front of the piece paper with this story that the girl had written, completely motionless. I knew this before I read it. This is my story. I remembered it as I read.

Everything seems light while I sit there. I begin to smile. Everything is in its place. I hear the rustling of her bed sheets behind me, but I am content. I am finally content. I understand it now. I turn around slowly to stare into her waist, smiling. Somehow I can tell that she knows it's complete too.

The gush of air flattens me and I am pinned down under the heat of her palm. I wonder what is happening in my other life.

* * *

I wake, cold and damp in the bus shelter. The rain pours down in waves on the road in front of me. It is already dark, but I wake with a feeling of satisfaction. It is the best I have ever felt. I know how to complete it now. I know how to write the story – I know how to complete the circle.

I look at my watch. It is late. In fact it is early in the next day – a brand new day. She must be around somewhere. I jump to my feet and begin jogging. I don't search for her on sidewalks like I was doing before I slept; instead my eyes are on the horizon. I look for her silhouette.

She's not hard to find, and my heart relaxes with happiness, a smile coming across my face. I don't feel the cold or the wet at all. I run. I run straight ahead. I can see her dull silhouette striding; wading through the buildings. I will come out in front of her. I finally reach the intersection and she comes into view. Her ankles glisten, bathed in light, and films of water are visible running down her legs. Above, the weak streetlights struggle with her height and manage only to illuminate her face with a dull glow in the darkness so high above.

I am stuck to the ground. She is a glorious sight as she walks towards me, her nightie clinging to her like skin. I am relieved to find her. I have finally got her back. I am so happy that I don't even move as her foot comes down at me. The feeling of striking the asphalt is insignificant; the pain washes away with the rain that soaks me.

I look up into the blackness under her clinging nightie, and she turns. I knew she would. Her neck bends and she looks at me. I am waving. It is an emancipating feeling – a release... I am finally able to get her attention instead of running from it. A weight is lifted from my heart as a physical one comes down on me from above. I am washed in the water that falls from her.

I am ecstatic when her fingers wrap around me. It is almost complete. I am lifted, and so is my heart. She is crushing me though, and I struggle and squirm in her hand to try and breathe better, though I am not scared. It is hot, despite the cold. In moments I am again in the sheets of water, and I look up to see that they fall from her breasts, clearly defined by the wet fabric that clings to them. I am at her waist, and the top seam of her black underwear is just metres from me. I feel like embracing her.

Her fingers close around me again, and I begin wiggling, though not to escape, but to let her know I am here. I turn and squirm, as if I am in a comfy, warm bed and am trying to cuddle up under the covers.

The heat persists but the waves of water coming in through her fingers lessen. I hear her footsteps. She is ascending the stairs. I am thrown about – she is pushing her door open and going inside.

When I am finally released, it is pitch black, and I strike the wet material of her nightie. Warm fabric bears down from above. I am in her bed. We are in her bed. The warmth and comfort overwhelms me and I smile in the blackness. I am home. It is complete.

I am not scared. I know the ending already – I have already lived it.

The End.
And the Beginning.