To Cristal Two

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The steps were simple: first, knock on the door; then you have two options: if someone answers, you tell them you are looking for Rodney Steele, that you’re there for his drains. We were dressed as plumbers. After they tell you they are not Rodney Steele, then you apologize for the mistake and move on to the next building, because you never knock in the same building twice. Option two is if no one answers, you knock again. Then you knock a third time. If still no one answers, then you try the doorknob. If the door is locked, you can move on to the next door. The goal is to find a door where no one answers, the door is unlocked, and no one is named Rodney Steele. Then you quietly and gently open the door. You ask Rodney Steele if he’s home, and reassure him that you’re the plumber from Plumb Good Plumbing, and ask if we should come back at another time. I am supposed to say nothing. If still no one says anything, you assume the coast is clear and we can begin.

Since Rob is the better talker, Rob is the prairie dog. I told Rob I didn’t want to be the prairie dog. He said, “I just told you you wouldn’t be.” I told him I didn’t want to be the prairie dog. The prairie dog hangs out by the door or the window if the door isn’t optimal and calls out if someone is coming. Normally, Jim Lasciare is the prairie dog, and Rob is the chipmunk. But Jim Lasciare is in scary jail. He’s in scary jail because it doesn’t matter why, that’s why. So since Rob is a better talker than me, I am the chipmunk. Being the chipmunk is so easy even a derp like me could do it.

The prairie dog is there to keep me safe, so I don’t have to be scared. They also watch out for the police. If you see the police you book it. Book it means run. While the prairie dog watches out, the chipmunk goes in and puts the valuable stuff in the black plastic trash bag. These are some examples of valuable things for the chipmunk to steal: electronic devices, jewelry, money, small safes that are small enough that even my scrawny ass can carry them, things that are gold, things that are diamond, furniture that is small enough that even my scrawny ass can carry it, and anything else that might be valuable. Use my best judgment.

We were inside somebody else’s flat. Rodney Steele wasn’t home, so the coast was clear. It was alright. I didn’t need to worry, I just needed to shut up and do it. I told Rob I didn’t like the way it looked, because it was too frightening. Rob said, “It isn’t frightening, it’s just different. Like Auntie Elma’s house. Her house sucks and smells like walnuts, but you got used to it.” Auntie Elma’s house smells like walnuts. She has a cat named Pinch that tried to take my biscuits with jam. Rodney Steele’s house did not smell like walnuts. “It’s not Rodney Steele,” Rob said. “There is no Rodney Steele, retard.”

Rodney Steele’s house was awful. Everything was evil in there, and I was scared. The lights didn’t work right, they were all blue and made all the white stuff shiny. The lights kept everything still dark. There were steer skulls on the walls and the walls and everything were black, and there were lots of big tall long skinny candles. I hated it. They were just goths, pussy, but I still hated it. I hated it in there.

I went back to the door to tell Rob that we should probably go because it was a bad flat, but he just shut the door again and said, “Just get the stuff like I told you, Jesus Christ,” from the other side. I looked around, but there was nothing I could touch anywhere in the flat. I couldn’t touch their TV or their DVD player, because of
the little statues of demons. I couldn’t touch any of the shelves with silver devils or crystal ghosts on them. I
couldn’t touch any of the candleholders. The kitchen was very dark and dirty, so there was nothing I could
touch in there either. My black plastic trash bag was empty. It was supposed to be full enough that we would be
loaded for weeks. Or that Rob would be loaded for weeks. I couldn’t get any of the money because it would
look suspicious, and Rob said I would go to scary jail. I didn’t want to go to scary jail, because of how scary it
is.

In the hallway, I was scared too, but I went down the hallway of skulls to the first door. Bravery. I didn’t have
to knock, because no one was there. But I still knocked a little. I was being brave, like Wild Ranger. Would
Wild Ranger be scared of a door? No. Would Wild Ranger pee his pants because it was dark? No. Alright then,
I should just do it. I should stop being a chicken. I opened the door.

Everything was black in there also, and the light was also blue. The bed and covers and pillows were all black
and frilly. I couldn’t touch them. I walked all the way into the room, being brave, like Wild Ranger, but being
scared, like I wasn’t supposed to. There were two of everything, two pillows, two black bedside tables, two
skull lamps, two phone chargers, two black guitars, two dreamcatchers, and two candles. None of it that I could
touch. There was a big mirror that scared me because I thought that it was someone else, but it was just me.
They had a tarantula. They weren’t supposed to have a tarantula, because spiders are bad.

One thing there was a lot of was pictures. That reminded me of Auntie Elma’s house too because she also had a
lot of pictures. Auntie Elma kept a lot of pictures of me, and mom, and Pinch, and our cousins. She didn’t have
any of Rob though. Rob said it was because she was a bitch. Maybe Auntie Elma knew Rodney Steele, and
that’s why they both had so many pictures. I looked at the pictures to see if Rodney Steele had any of mom or
Pinch or me. I looked at the pictures for a long time.

She looked like Cristal. There was a girl in all of the pictures, who looked like my babysitter from a long time
ago. Cristal babysat me when Rob had to live at a house called juvy, and she was a very good babysitter, with
black hair with colors at the end. Cristal was very nice, she was the nicest person I’ve ever met. No one is nicer
than Cristal in the entire world, except for mom. When Cristal babysat me, she used to listen to me read from
Lakes, Estuaries, and Tributaries while she smoked from her alien pipe that was for grownups. The girl in all
the photos looked like a whole new Cristal. She must have been the sequel to Cristal. She was very pretty. I
liked all of those pictures, because she had black hair with bright red or bright green or bright yellow or bright
pink at the end, and her eyes had a lot of makeup like Cristal, and she was very thin and bony, like me. She had
a nose ring, and was wearing a lot of bracelets in all her photos.

There was also some other person in all the photos. I guess it was Rodney Steele. Only one of the photos had
only Cristal Two. It was a small oval with her face in it. She was smiling at me.
I couldn’t believe all of Cristal Two’s photos were trapped in such a scary place. Her pictures must have been stolen. Or maybe Cristal Two was stolen and they let her bring her pictures with her. Cristal Two must have been so scared of this place. She was trapped here, like Caoimhe in *Wild Ranger 2: Guess Who’s in Distress*. I started putting her photos in the black plastic trash bag. These were the only valuable things I could touch. Plus I needed Cristal Two’s photos. I needed to save them.

The oval photo was special. I put the little oval photo in my pocket, because that was the one where she was smiling at me, and there was no Rodney Steele. I put all of the other photos in the black plastic trash bag. Then I heard Rob. “Those might be our goths. Downstairs, getting out of their car. Get out here,” he said. Since there were so many pictures in there, I couldn’t get out there, I still had a few more to put in the black plastic trash bag. They were all around the room. I went and hurried to the dresser to look for all the ones that had Cristal Two, which were most of them. “Nick, get your ass out here, they’re coming up the stairs,” said Rob. But I couldn’t get my ass out there yet and leave any of her photos behind. I was scared and brave and saving her. There were more photos on the walls that I had to unhook off the nails. I heard Rob open the door. “Nick! If you don’t get your retarded ass out here, I’m leaving you behind!” he whisper-yelled. The last photo was of Cristal Two in front of a big graveyard thing called a mausoleum, she was smiling with just her dark lips and looking right at me, and Rodney Steele was there too. I put it in the black plastic trash bag with the others, went down the hallway, and out to the door where Rob was. There were footsteps coming up the stairs. The black plastic trash bag was heavy with pictures. What the hell took me so long, was I trying to get us in jail? I said no. Down the other staircase, tard, they’re coming up that one. We had to hurry, we had to go go go. Once we were down the stairs, I was following Rob to his brown car. I was looking for the corrosion that looked like the car took a shower in acid. We were in the car and Rob started it very fast. I was holding the photos of Cristal Two safely in my lap. We drove away.

In the car, on the road, going fast, Rob kept looking in the rearview mirror and turning around to look behind us. He was driving fast. You should only drive fast if it’s an emergency, that’s what mom says. But this is an emergency, unless I like the idea of getting my pipes adjusted in a prison cell until I turn twenty-five. I just couldn’t wait to get home and put up my pictures of Cristal Two. Some could go on my desk to look at me while I’m on my computer, and some could go on my TV stand to watch me while I watch my TV. I was thinking I could color over Rodney Steele’s face with the black sharpie Auntie Elma keeps in the drawer of papers.

But we didn’t go home. We drove down by a dam, where there were no other people around. It was starting to get dark outside. Rob parked us next to what’s called an embankment, next to a big open pipe with no water coming out of it. I think there was supposed to be water coming out of it.

Once we were parked, Rob just sat there, not looking at me. He was just looking straight ahead. The car was still vibrating. Since Rob wasn’t asking me anything, I didn’t say anything. I was just holding onto the pictures. Then, Rob turned off the car and got out, closing the door. I guessed we were getting out of the car now, so I
got out too, still holding the black plastic trash bag of Cristal Two. Rob took a few steps around the car, but
didn’t seem to be going anywhere, just circles. But then Rob scared me. He let out a really big, loud, long yell
up at the sky, and started jumping while still yelling. I don’t know why he was yelling and also smiling. After a
few more seconds of jumping and punching the air, that’s when he finally spoke. “Damn, that was close!
Daraaaamn!” he said. He was looking at me, but I didn’t say anything. “Alright, let’s see it,” he said. I didn’t
know what he wanted to see. “The bag, you jackass,” he said. I didn’t know what Rob would do with the
pictures. Maybe he wouldn’t like them, or maybe he would want half of them because he would fall in love
with Cristal Two too. I thought the pictures should stay with me, since they’re Cristal Two’s. I was the one
being like Wild Ranger, and Wild Ranger and his partners didn’t both ride off with the girl at the end of the
movie. She only loved Wild Ranger, that’s why she says “I love you, Wild Ranger,” at the end, not “I love you,
Wild Ranger and Wild Ranger’s friend.”

Rob just looked at me across the headlights. “What in the fuck are you talking about?” Rob said. “Just give me
the bag,” he said. I couldn’t give him the bag. Those photos didn’t belong to him. Cristal Two was smiling at
me, not at him. “Jesus, are they not teaching you English in retard class? Hand it over!” No. “Do I need to beat
your ass like when you were little?” he said. No. “The bag,” Rob said. He was holding out his hand at me. I
didn’t say anymore No’s. I just turned around and clenched onto the black plastic trash bag. He jumped at me,
and I tried to run away, but he caught me and started grabbing the black plastic trash bag. Why was I being
such a bitch? I told him it’s mine. He was still struggling with me, but I lost the black plastic trash bag, and
Rob pushed me away.

When he opened the black plastic trash bag, he didn’t take anything out of it. He just looked up at me. His face
was getting all mad like that time in the backyard when he was burning bird nests with mom’s lighter, and I
told on him, and he punched me in the stomach. I told him he wasn’t supposed to do that. “Shut up, bitch!” he
said, and pushed my face into the dirt and went back inside. His face was getting mad just like that. Then he
took out one of Cristal Two’s photos. “What. The hell. Is this?” he said. He said it like that. Like. This. I told
him he needed to give it back. He went digging through the bag again. “There’s— there’s nothing but pictures
in here,” Rob said. “Where the hell is everything else?” he said. I told him he needed to give me back the
pictures, they’re mine, and I felt scared. “I told you to take everything but the kitchen sink! I almost got my ass
busted for a bunch of pictures?” Rob said. I wanted the pictures back. “Is your retarded brain leaking, why the
hell didn’t you get anything else?” Rob said. I wanted the pictures back. “What the fuck are we supposed to do
with a bunch of pictures of some random Satan worshiper and his bitch?” Rob said. She is not a bitch and I
wanted the pictures back, and the yelling was scaring me. “God damnit!” he yelled, and he slammed the black
plastic trash bag on the concrete. All of the pictures of Cristal Two made a shatter sound inside the black plastic
trash bag and I started to cry. I told him to not crash them and I wanted the pictures back. “You want the
pictures back, bitch?” he said. Then, he turned around and hurled them into the river going into the dam. “Go
get them!” Rob said after he threw them in the river. I was very mad at Rob, and I was crying more now. I told
him I was going to tell on him when he took me back home. Rob ran back to the car and got in. I went to my
door but it wouldn’t open. “Good luck with that!” he yelled at me through the window. Then he started driving his car away. Now I was the one yelling. His car kept going and going, then it was gone. I got really, really scared. I don’t know this dam. I didn’t know where to go to go home. The dam seemed really big now, and no one was there. It was empty. And it was getting dark. And I was all alone.

After I cried some more, I asked mom to come save me, but she couldn’t hear me. So I called out to her even louder, but she still couldn’t hear me. No one responded to me, except for myself from echoes, like that time in Carlsbad Cavern when mom told me I could yell out whatever I wanted just once, so I yelled stalagmites and it sounded for a long time. I got in trouble from the tour guide, because we weren’t supposed to yell at the cave, but mom told him it wasn’t my fault, it was hers, and if he didn’t like it he could shove one of those stalag-thingys up his ass. It was stalagmites. But after my echoes in the dam disappeared, I couldn’t hear anything but cars on the road up above. I didn’t know how to find mom, or Rob, or even Auntie Elma. Rob had left me two times before, but both times were at school, so I just went to the principal and she called mom because I was crying. I didn’t know what to do in a place I didn’t know. I didn’t know if there were any principals here. I didn’t know where I was, I didn’t know where anything was, except for Rodney Steele’s flat around the block.

Which was when I thought of my idea. I didn’t know where home was, or where my old school was, but I knew where Rodney Steele’s flat was. I could go back to Rodney Steele’s flat. If I just went to Rodney Steele’s flat, Cristal Two could save me. And I could save her too. Cristal Two could call my mom, and then she could come live with me after I took her away from Rodney Steele. Then it would be happily ever after, just like Wild Ranger, but there would be no credits. So I walked up out of the dam.

It was getting dark and scary all the way back to Rodney Steele’s apartment buildings. On the way, I tried to make myself cry less because Wild Ranger never cried when he was saving a girl. He never cried at all. I wiped my eyes on my shirt. Now that it was dark, the lights were on in Rodney Steele’s hallway. I kept getting more and more nervous, like I couldn’t breathe and my ears were hot. Cristal Two was going to be there. I was nervous. Rodney Steele’s door was right in front of me. I was at that door only a little while ago. I wondered if Cristal Two was really on the other side of it. I was scared, more scared than even before when I was the chipmunk. I felt hot in my face. I knocked on the door.

It felt like I was waiting at the dentist Dr. Latrina’s office when I was waiting for Rodney Steele’s door to open. It felt like a really long time. But then the doorknob turned.

It was her. She was there. Cristal Two was standing right in front of me, half behind the door. I was more nervous standing in front of her than I was meeting Wild Ranger at the mall or meeting Santa Claus, also at the mall. She was looking right at me. “Hi?” she said. She must have been scared because she was scared of the inside of Rodney Steele’s flat, because she seemed scared. Her voice sounded like a warm hot chocolate felt. I couldn’t think of anything but I remember everything. I couldn’t believe even one of her eyes was looking at me. The other was hidden on the other side of the door.
“Can I help you?” Cristal Two said. It was really really really really hard to speak. Really, I didn’t speak at all. I could barely understand her as she spoke. “Were you crying?” she said. I couldn’t tell her the answer because I was out of words, and I didn’t have any air inside me. She opened the door a little bit more. Now I could see all of her. Cristal Two was just staring at me with both of her eyes, like in the pictures, but unlike the pictures, they were moving, like a movie. I remembered I had to save her. “Is everything okay?” she said. I told her I was lost and alone and was here to save her. “You’re lost?” she said. Cristal Two looked all over me. “Are you a plumber?” she said. No. She didn’t say anything after that for a second. She was wearing all of her black things and all of the bracelets like in the pictures. Her hair was blue and red now, at the ends. “How did you get lost?” I told her my brother left me in a dam. Wow, that sounded just awful! I was a poor thing. I needed to save her. “Save me?” Cristal Two said. “I’m starting to think you’re the one that needs saving.” Her mouth was a smile. Cristal Two asked if I had a phone. No. “Do you need to call your parents?” she said. Yes, my mom. “Umm…” was all Cristal Two said, and stopped. She looked like she didn’t know the answer to a question on a test. “Can you give us a second?” Cristal Two said. “We’ve kind of got something going on here. But I’ll go talk to my husband, and I’ll be right back. So don’t go anywhere, okay?” The door closed.

Cristal Two said don’t move, so I didn’t move. I don’t know why she said she had a husband. I didn’t think Rodney Steele would allow such a thing. And not one of the girls on Wild Ranger ever had a husband, not a single one. Two of them had boyfriends, but one died, and the other went to scary jail. So there was always room for Wild Ranger.

The door opened, and Cristal Two was there behind it. But also, there was a man behind her. It was Rodney Steele. He looked the same as he did in all of Cristal Two’s pictures. I couldn’t look at his eyes for very long, they were not good. “You can come in with us and we’ll call your parents,” said Cristal Two. “Me and my husband are both going to stay in the living room with you, while you wait. Are you okay with that?” I couldn’t say yes because Rodney Steele was looking right at me, but I nodded my head to say yes.

She led me inside with her and Rodney Steele. But it was scary in there. Oh no, it was alright, it was just some little knick knacks, nothing to be scared of. Cristal Two wasn’t going to let anything hurt me. It was scary in that flat. “I promise everything will be just fine,” Cristal Two said. “I won’t let anything hurt you.” She touched my shoulder and motioned me into Rodney Steele’s flat. She touched my shoulder. Going into the flat was the brave thing to do, just like Wild Ranger.

Still, it was scary in there. Everything was still all evil in there. I was scared. But it was alright, I could sit on the couch while she called my parents. I didn’t need to be scared. I didn’t sit down. The lights still didn’t work right; they were all blue and made all the white stuff shiny. The lights kept everything still dark. There were still steer skulls on the walls and the walls and everything were still black, and there were lots of big tall long skinny candles. I hated it. They were just goths.
“What’s your name?” Cristal Two said. Nick. Cristal Two said that her name was Lennon and Rodney Steele’s name was Solomon. Rodney Steele didn’t say anything, he was just standing behind the couch, with his hands behind his back. He was always keeping his hands behind his back. “What is your parent’s phone number?” said Cristal Two. I didn’t know. “The number you use to call your mom or dad?” Cristal Two said. I told her to call my mom. “You don’t know the number.” Call her on the phone. “I know that, sweetie, but which numbers do I use to call her?” she said. The principal called mom on the phone at school. She turned around to Rodney Steele. Then I heard Rodney Steele’s voice. “He doesn’t know it,” he said. “The police will be here soon, they’ll help him.”

The police? “Yes honey, they’re on their way,” Cristal Two said. I asked why are the police coming? “Well, we had something bad happen—” I asked are they coming for me? Cristal Two’s face looked like almost a laugh. I guess she thought the police were funny, but the police were bad. If you see police you book it. Book it means run. “Yes, honey, they’re going to help you.” I told her I don’t want them to come for me. The police are bad. I have to run now. “Woah, wait a second,” said Cristal Two. Rodney Steele also said something but I don’t know what. They both stood up and tried to get me to sit back down again. “It’s okay, sweetheart, it’s oooookay,” Cristal Two said. I said the police are coming for me. “No, honey, they’re just going to help you,” she said. I asked her why she called the police for me, since they’re bad. “They’re not bad,” Cristal Two said. She and Rob seemed to disagree on if the police were bad. “They’re going to help you. But we didn’t call them on you,” she said. She said it like that. On you. On me. She didn’t call them on me. “We had something kind of scary happen here. So we called them because of that. But it has nothing to do with you, honey.” She was touching my shoulder. She touched my shoulder. I sat down on their scary couch.

Cristal Two sat back down on the chair across from me, across their scary table, and Rodney Steele stepped back. She had a look on her face that wasn’t in any of her pictures. Cristal Two never looked uneasy in her pictures. Her face was now a little bit uneasy, but not all the way, like Guinevere in Wild Ranger 6: Save the Daughter from the Man Who Bought Her, where she was about to be revealed through her disguise to be Piper’s property until Wild Ranger’s quick thinking convinced Piper that she actually belonged to Ranger himself.

“Now who told you that the police are so bad? They’re not scary at all,” said Cristal Two. My brother. “Your brother?” she said. Yes. He was the prairie dog. “A prairie dog and a plumber,” she said. I told her I want to go home. “I know, honey, they’ll be here soon.” We sat there. Except Rodney Steele, he was still standing, with his hands behind his back. “What makes your brother a prairie dog? Is that a game?” The prairie dog keeps watch. I want to go home. “I know honey, you’re almost home. The police are going to be here soon.” I remembered again I had to save her. I kept forgetting. I asked her if she would come with me. She made another face like she was going to laugh again. “Come with you?” she said. “Sorry, I’ve got to stay here. Me and Solomon have to help the police catch the bad guys.” There were bad guys? Yes, apparently there were. I said like on Wild Ranger. “Wild Ranger?” said Cristal Two. “Do you mean those old movies?” Yes. She said
yes, just like on Wild Ranger. I asked was it Rodney Steele? She made another laugh face. Cristal Two thought
I was funny. “Who is that? Is he from those movies?” she said. I didn’t want to tell her who Rodney Steele was,
since he was looking right at me. I was afraid of what he would do if I pointed at him. Maybe he would punch
me in the stomach like Rob used to say and do. I didn’t tell her who Rodney Steele was. Instead, I asked her
what the bad guys did. Did they capture her? Did they abduct her and force her to live with Injuns?

Then she said something really strange, something I didn’t understand. “Nooo, nothing like that.” she said.
“They stole a lot of our pictures.” I couldn’t say anything to that. I took the pictures, with Rob. But she said
that bad guys took the pictures. Did the bad guys get the pictures out of the river? I couldn’t say anything.
“Very scary, isn’t it?” she said. “That’s why you’ve got to be careful, and if you’re in danger, call the police.” I
couldn’t say anything. What did the bad guys do with Cristal Two’s pictures? Who were these bad guys? I
didn’t have any air inside me to speak with. “So, you see? The police are good. At least, sometimes they are, I
guess. And if you’re scared it’s okay to call them,” said Cristal Two. “Are you going to be brave when they get
here?”

Bravery. I had to be brave now. Cristal Two was scared because of the bad guys. I asked Cristal Two if she was
scared. “Yes,” she said. “Wouldn’t you be scared if someone took all of your photos?” No. Then I asked her if
she would not be scared if she had the pictures back. “Yes, I would feel a lot better if I had my pictures back.” I
told her I can give her a picture. Again, another laugh face, but this time with an actual little laugh. I liked that
laugh. I made her laugh. “That’s very sweet,” she said. I told her I could give her my picture, the picture I have.
“Thank you, honey, but I don’t just want any picture. I want my pictures back.” She said it like that again. My
pictures. Her pictures.

I told her I tried to save them. Cristal Two started to make a laugh face again, but then looked at me confused,
kind of like neighbor Charles’s dog when you make a funny whistle. I told her but I couldn’t save all of them. I
took the small oval picture out of my pocket, for her. It was my favorite.

Cristal Two looked at the photo like she was watching a scary movie, with big eyes and a long face. Rodney
Steele also looked with that look. Then she looked up at me. I didn’t understand why her face looked scared
and not happy. Was it not the right picture? I looked at it, and it was. It had her and her pretty hair, and her
smiling at me, clear as day, crystal clear. “Where did you get that?” Rodney Steele said. I looked at his face
when he started talking, but I looked away right away, like it was the sun and I could go blind. “Where did you
find that?” said Cristal Two. She moved her hand really fast and tried to take the picture, but I pulled it back to
me and closed it in my hand. “Did you find it outside our apartment? Or outside the building?” Their voices
were scaring me. And their faces were scaring me, so I looked at the ground. Then I opened my hand and
looked at Cristal Two’s smiling face, inside the oval. I talked to it, so I wouldn’t be scared. I was scared. “I
can’t hear you, what did you say?” said Rodney Steele’s voice from in front of me. I couldn’t say louder. I
pointed to their room.
The questions stopped. There were no more noises. There were no more movements. The whole world was just a picture now. Rodney Steele stepped between me and Cristal Two. “You were in our apartment?” he said. I couldn’t say. I was very very very very scared now. “Answer me,” said his voice again. I nodded yes. “You break into our apartment and steal all my wife’s pictures… and now… what? Why did you come back here?” Scared. I couldn’t say. I didn’t have any air. Shaking. “What are you doing here?” his voice said again. I talked to the photo. “What?” said his voice. “I can’t hear you, man. Why are you in my house right now?” I said it out loud that time. I told him I was here to save her.

When Rodney Steele took his hand from behind his back, there was a knife. I was scared. I was looking at the knife. I shook. I was scared of the knife. “You need to get out of here right now,” said his voice. I couldn’t move. Scared. I was shaking. I shook. I was scared. The knife. “I’m not warning you anymore, dammit, get the hell out of my house,” said his voice loud. I couldn’t move, my legs were dead. Cristal Two was behind Rodney Steele, not saying anything, with a very scared face. I was breathing very hard. There was a loud weee woooo noise coming closer and closer from outside. “I said get out!” and he raised the knife closer to me. I started screaming and screaming over and over and over again, and I tried to grab his arm that was holding the knife that was coming towards me. When I grabbed his arm everyone started screaming, Rodney Steele yelled at me to let go dammit let go and Cristal Two was yelling for us to stop it and I was just yelling and screaming and scared. He kept shaking me and the knife was so close to my face I could smell the metal. I screamed my loudest and was crying. Rodney Steele’s foot lifted up and kicked me in the stomach and I flew across the room into something my body smashed, and it was on me, and I was covered in ghosts and demons. I was on the ground. I was hurting, and I was crying too. I could see red and blue lights flashing out the window through the black curtain. Rodney Steele yelled to run run run and Rodney Steele ran out the door holding Cristal Two’s hand. I heard their footsteps going away down the stairs. I was crying a lot now, more ever than in my life before, more even than at that church service for mom that she didn’t come to, where Auntie Elma told me that I had to live with her now because mom was gone, and I said no, that I wanted to wait for mom. Auntie Elma said I could bring my computer and my TV and my books, but I said no, I’ll wait for mom at my house, but she said mom wasn’t coming back, and I asked how long do I have to wait before she’s back? Rodney Steele yelled that the guy was upstairs right now, and I heard new footsteps coming up the stairs, and walkie-talkies, and policemen opened the door.

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