

Without hesitation I pressed down on the gas pedal. Sweat ran down the back of my nervous neck. My mother barked orders at me while I concentrated on the people in front of us. The Ford F-150 Super Duty in front of our Prius could stop any minute, and we would die on impact. Perfect rush hour this morning.

“Watch for the car on your left, don’t put on your blinker either.” My nervously strained Mother said.

“Mom, you don’t have to yell, you’re in the passenger seat.” I replied, annoyed by her constant nagging.

“Parker, I wanted to make sure you heard me, because sometimes it’s like you don’t hear me.”

“Whatever” I sighed

It was 8:00 A.M. on a Saturday and I wasn’t in the mood to get in an argument with my Mom. Especially because she could ground me, then I wouldn’t be able to go to Chad’s pool party later. And I can’t miss a chance to go to a party with Jessica Thompson at it. Jessica is the girl that just moved here, but nobody knew her until Chad, Joseph and I stumbled upon her. I didn’t join in to greet her because, I admit, I have always been shy to new people. So tonight was a perfect opportunity to make a first impression.

Once we arrived home, I went straight to my room to do my morning ritual of sleeping in, playing Fifa 2012 World Cup and showering for an hour. After a few hours, it was breakfast time, at 1:30P.M.

“You’d better get ready for that party, it’s at 3:00” Warned my Dad,

“Dad, I still have an hour and a half, chill.” I replied while chewing on my Corn Flakes.

“Well you still have to mow the lawn, clean your room and take your Brother to soccer practice.”

“5 minutes on room, 15 on lawn and 30 on driving Mitchell!” I planned to my Dad.

Me and my poor scheduling, by the time I finished mowing the lawn it was 2:15. My room took 5 minutes, but I did a poor job, and I dropped Mitchell off at soccer practice at 2:50. I had 10 minutes to go home, get my swimsuit and listen to my Mom nag about my sloppy room. Sounds like a personal challenge to attempt. I slipped in and out in a flash, neither Mom nor Dad noticing me. I sped down St. Reddman Street to Chad's house there in less than 15 minutes. Since I just began to drive, being 18 years old, I was surprised I didn't kill a few people on the way. When I got there, only 3 other cars were there. As I walked in I was greeted by Chad, Steven and some other person setting up a ping-pong table. I tried to surprise them, but the person I didn't know blew my cover.

"Hey, wait... Aren't you Parker?" He asked with a curious smile on his face.

"Yea, who are you?" I asked

"I'm David, David Anderson. From 4th grade, remember?"

"Doesn't ring a bell." I said confused and paralyzed by his ghostly stare

"I got expelled for anger issues, threw a chair at Mrs. Juan"

"Oh, yea. It's nice to see your smiling face again!" I said sarcastically.

After a little while, 20 more people came, including Jessica. I was in the basement playing pool when Jessica came downstairs and sat down on the couch. I left my game to go 'make my move.' I sat down next to her, Mountain Dew in one hand and my other 'accidentally' landed on hers. But she never hesitated, she just looked over me with her gleaming blue eyes. She slightly smiled, and then looked away.

"Well, if it isn't Jessica Thompson, our brand new recruit to Creston High School. How's it treating you, the new school?" I asked her slyly.

"Oh it's going fine. And you are who?" She laughed

"I'm Parker Reynolds. And I believe I was correct with your name?"

"Surprisingly, you were. How did you know?" she asked

“How couldn’t I know your name? Especially if it’s the name of someone like you...” I said as I drifted off. She giggled, stood up, and then went up the steps. I rejoined my game, triumphing by winning, and then the pool began to call my name.

“Cannonball!” I Yelled as I dove into the pool, making a mushroom cloud of water splash throughout the pool. A parade of complaints and laughs up roared.

“Parker, you’re such a chi-” said Steven as he was interrupted by a scream, the screeches of tires and gun shots. The whole area went quiet and we all ran out of the pool towards the front of the house where the event had happened. A whole crowd was already formed in front of the lawn where the event happened. Chad shoved his way to the front, clearing a path for me to follow. My heart wrenched as I saw Jessica, bleeding on the ground with bullet holes in her chest, neck and head. I stood there speechless, motionless and breathless while staring at her limp, lifeless body. My heart pounded in my throat and then stopped instantly as if it was when her soul had departed from her body. From the still, quiet crowd I heard a frantic voice call 911. I then noticed that I was standing 5 feet closer to her body than anybody else. My hand reached for my shoulder and the other covered my mouth. Jessica’s Sister Monica busted through the crowd screaming, and then grabbed Jessica’s hand.

Minutes later, the paramedics arrived. Monica wouldn’t let go of Jessica’s body on the stretcher, so I had to pull her off. For no apparent reason I was sitting on the couch next to Monica, rubbing her, holding her while she was crying. When her parents came, they were in tears. But the Father had seen me comforting Monica, and he had given me an awful look though he wasn’t crying at all. Soon, the police had to break up the crowd for interrogation in order to find evidence. David Anderson’s car pulled up as I got ready to be interrogated.

“Dude, that was- that was gruesome. I feel so sorry for her family.” He sighed

“Yea, just when I began to get to know her. Sucks that this was only her first week to.” I whimpered. I thought that it was weird how David’s car wasn’t here during the shooting, but he knew all the details. That added to my suspicion so I did my own little interrogation session.

“So where did you go? You just got here” I questioned

“I went to grab some food”

“Good point, but how did you know what happened if you had just now gotten here?” I inquired

“Michelle told me what had happened, she seen it all go down. That’s why she was interrogated first.” David was interrogated before me. I had overheard him telling what he had seen.

“The vehicle shot out of was a dark green Honda Civic, 2008 I think. There were 2 people in the vehicle, one shooter and one accomplice. The license number began with SKV and I didn’t catch the rest.” He told the officer. It brought me suspicion that he used the words; I think, I didn’t catch the rest. I went after he had gone, and I told the authorities that I was in the pool at the time, and hadn’t seen anything besides Jessica’s dead body. Next, I was going to ask Michelle what she had seen, and what she had told David. She was in the kitchen talking to some other people when I had asked to see her. After 10 minutes of waiting, she had finally gotten done with her conversation.

“So Michelle, pretty terrible what had happened. Just when was about to ask her out.” I had said to break the ice.

“Really, I don’t think you had a chance.” She said as harshly as an ox.

“Oh, thanks! But what did you see happen, I heard you seen it all. And you were interrogated first.”

“Who did you hear that from? I had lead Jessica to the door because she was going to grab her swimsuit, I closed the door, and then I had heard gun shots. I didn’t see anything other than Jessica take her last breathes.” She had answered.

“Hhmm, interesting. Now you can go back to what you were doing, I’ve got business to take care of.” I said, intent on catching the culprit now that I had a fake relationship with deceased Jessica. I was tempted to confront David and tell him what I had found, but the results might not turn out the best. But how did he know all of the information?

By the time the police left, it was 7:00, and I had to be home at 10:00. The party had died down after the incident, so there was nothing to do except leisure in my soggy bathing suit in a

towel on the couch. The rest of the evening was quiet, and nobody had bothered to speak up or do anything. I went home early, quietly ate dinner while discussing the murder to my family, and then went to bed. It was even harder to see my family's reactions then it was telling them what happened. Mitchell couldn't believe it, he even resorted to calling me a liar. He seemed oddly effected badly by this, though he hadn't heard of her until now. My mother sobbed while gripping my dad. I couldn't tell if they were actual tears of sadness, or tears of joy that I wasn't killed to. My father acknowledged me for not dying, and being sincere. We finished dinner and I went to bed rather than joining them on the couch to watch the news report. I couldn't bear to hear anything else. I fell up the stairs, step by step, too weak to hold myself up. I changed into some comfortable clothes, then went straight to my haven of a bed. I couldn't stop thinking about the death. About the scream, the gunshots and the look on dead Jessica's face. I sat in the dark, thinking about all that might have happened if she survived, if the whole shooting had never happened. I pictured us, walking in the halls at school, laughing. A tear rolled down my cheek, uncontrollably. I wiped it off as I pulled the covers over my head, as if it would make everything go away. As if it would bring Jessica back, as if it could make this never happen. A shield from the memories that would haunt me for the rest of my life. And I sat there staring at its fabrics until I drifted off.

The next morning was haunted by nightmares and pain from my bruise from rolling of the bed in the middle of the night. Within the first 5 minutes that I was awake, I had gotten 5 texts bringing me more horror. In the middle of the night, somebody had broken into the Thompson's house, and had bludgeoned them to death. As I broke the news to my already depressed parents, something sparked in me. Everybody besides Jessica's father had died, and I still had David as my prime suspect. And my passion for Jessica had overwhelmed me. I had become obsessed with her death. Over the past days it was the only thing I had thought of, I abandoned Fifa 2012, hanging out with friends and showering. My next step was to confront David, tell him what I had heard about his alibi. I drove to his house, surprisingly luxurious, due to his crude behavior. I entered his house to see his Mom slaving over their stove, making a meal of great proportion. She greeted me then led me to David's room, where he was blasting music. He was benching weights, 200 pounds to be exact, his muscles were bulging to the size of large pears.

“Hey Parker, what’s up?” He said happily

“Nothing much, just needed to talk about something.” I replied

“Talk away good buddy!” He sounded way too enthusiastic as he chirped these words that rung in my ears for a moment.

“Well, Michelle told me that she didn’t see a thing, and let alone tell you anything.”

“What?! That’s not true, she said everything to me!”

“Well you tell that to Michelle, because I’m sure that’ll go well!”

“Fine, I saw the whole shooting happen. I did go get some Subway, but I parked my car in the road next to the car. I was getting out and saw the car’s license plate, the brand and the model. One head was returning to the passenger window and somebody else had to be driving.”

“Why did you lie about Michelle telling you that?”

“I was afraid that if the killers got away, and from some source that they had heard I tried to turn them in, they’d kill me. So I gave Michelle all the credit, so if the murderers found out, I wouldn’t die.” He explained. His alibi fit perfectly into the scenario, so who else could be blamed? The only other person it could be was Jessica’s Father. But why would he do it? And even if he did, who could be his accomplice? It was time for me to get to the epicenter of this death mystery. I had to leave to get over to the Thompson’s house quickly, so I had to get David off my trail somehow.

“Hey, I-I- have to go and grab some groceries for my Mom. See you later!” I spurted out

“Wait, why are you so curious over the death of Jessica? You only met her once, in the middle of our game of pool.” He asked.

“No time to explain, I have to get going. Bye”

“Wait...” His words echoed in my head as I slammed the door in his face so he wouldn’t follow me. I sprinted down the steps towards their front door, I slipped on their welcome mat and had pounded my head on the hard, tile floor. I was dizzy, but I got up and continued towards my

car on my way out. I drove to Jessica's house in less than 15 minutes, probably a record timing. The first thing that caught my eye as I parked my car in their driveway was that they had a dark green Honda Civic parked in front of me. I got out of my car, and slowly approached the large, white Victorian style house. All of the windows were shut and covered up by frilly, white curtains. No way to see inside but to go through the front door and see it by entering. I knocked on the door, ignoring the doorbell. Mr. Thompson opened the door, he was very tall and wore a business suit.

"Oh, hello. Who are you?" He said with a deep, gurgling voice.

"I'm Parker, I used to be a friend of Jessica's. I came here to ask you a few questions concerning her death." I was careful not to use my last name, and when I asked him about asking questions concerning Jessica, he scowled.

"Be my guest, make yourself at home!" he said as he led me in to the large house. The doorway was about 3 feet taller than me and about 5 feet wider. The house was made of old, creaky wood that moved inches whenever I took a step. There was a room that looked like either a nice bathroom, or a small kitchen. We walked down a corridor a few steps then he suddenly stopped.

"You can go sit in the living room while I go and tidy up. I apologize, I'm a mess." He explained stepping through a doorway to his left. As I stood there, I searched the room, inspecting every aspect. After a few seconds, I felt nervous what was taking him so long. My pulse began to race and I began to sweat. Okay, okay, he's not doing anything, I thought to myself. I couldn't take it any longer. I stepped on the creaky wooden floor softly, not wanting to alarm him. I walked into a room smaller than the living room only to see a gun rack full of 20 gauges and .22LR'S. What a pleasant sight to walk into, especially if there's a .9mm Submachine Gun sitting on the table.

"Well it was nice seeing you, Parker." He whispered in my ear from a few feet away. I turned around to see him holding a 10mm pistol, then a spark appeared from the barrel and I was jerked to the my left. The last thing I saw was a portrait of Jessica and Monica on the wall, next to where my flaccid, aching body laid.

Epilogue

To my surprise, I had seen the light one last time on the day that my world stopped turning. The silver, glistening railing of the hospital bed felt like a cage as I tried to sit up. Pain strained through my back whenever I moved my left shoulder the slightest bit. After a half of an hour of moaning, I finally got a response from my Little Brother Mitchell stepping through the large wood door, crunching ice in his mouth. He gathered my parents and some of my friends around as they greeted me back to the world I missed so much. That day the only thing I had lost was an arm. Witnesses did see Mr. Thompson attempt to stuff me in his car's trunk, probably to take my body and burn it to oblivion. I gained the ability to move my head towards the T.V. only to see one main article;

BREAKING NEWS... Dan Thompson convicted of manslaughter on the 2nd degree paid bail by local 18 year old named David Anderson...

TO BE CONTINUED...