

Tara, my best friend since the 5<sup>th</sup> grade, and I sat on my bed, my speaker blasting some 90's rock. We were huddled around my computer, browsing through Jobs4u.com. My mom practically begged me to get out of the house, and since Tara and I had just turned 16, we thought of the amazing idea of getting an easy, quick, one-night job. We searched for what seemed like forever until one caught our attention. A dimly lit building was shown for the job stating, "Storage Unit needs to be watched overnight, 7pm Monday -10am Wednesday, sleeping bags provided." We looked at each other on sync, as I quickly opened the message function. We argued on what to say until we agreed on a simple, "Hey, is this still available?" The owner, which by the profile looked like a nice old lady quickly responded, "Yes," Stating an address. We typed in the location and was met with a dark, creepy building. We didn't think anything about it, so we signed up! I told my mom the big news, and she said she is happy I am showing responsibility.

Wrapping my hair around the hot curling iron, Tara, who is applying lip gloss, questions me, stating, "Are you sure this is safe?" I look at her in the mirror and shrug. "I am sure we will be fine," and we continue getting ready. We decided to ride our bikes, because my mom was busy with my younger sister, Amelia. I felt the cold wind on my face, and I was filled with excitement. First job, (if it counts!)

We arrived there, and the sun was already set. The owner, which introduces herself as Maya, greets us with a handshake and the keys. "Pretty simple, just don't do anything stupid, and watch the doors. People who may come in have their keys for their unit." We listened attentively, waiting for her to leave. As she left, Tara and I walked around. "Pretty normal layout," she says, scooting around in the creaky black desk chair. I sat down at the desk, shuffling through her papers so I could put down my bag.

It got boring quickly. We weren't necessarily allowed to go into people's storage unit, but we *did* have the keys. We decided to invite both of our crushes, and our 2 friends and their boyfriends. So, we had 6 people coming in the next hour. Tara turned to me and asked, "Can I use your charger? My phone died." I smiled and handed it to her. I left mine at home so I didn't need it anyway. We were bored out of our mind while waiting. I fiddled with the keys and got the bright idea. It was around 11pm and I asked, "Hey Tara, want to explore storage units?" She jumped up and said, "thought you would never ask." We headed to B3, and I wiggled the keys into the doorknob, filled with excitement. The door slowly creaked open. We both stared at each other. It was boring old furniture, and a few old documents. We agreed we should probably stop snooping, and were about to leave, when we heard a faint *meow*.

Me and Tara caught each other's eye and did a 180. "Did you hear that...?" I questioned, not believing my own ears. Tara nodded as we nearly ran back into the room. We searched couches, nightstands, drawers, and an old vintage record player. Nothing. We sat on the floor in disappointment, when a skinny, frail, black cat jumped into my lap. I gasped and we both awed in synchrony. I had my water bottle with me, so I dumped a little bit out for the poor feline. She was skinny as a twig, and I was determined to save her. I came to the realization that this *wasn't* our cat. We technically could not do anything. I pet her while pondering through my options, when I felt something wet on her. Staring at my red hand, I realized it was *blood*. I gasp, almost vomiting, as Tara yelps. The cat did not have any marks on it, but there was a tiny trail that led to a box. Tara and I sneakily walked toward the box, when a sudden noise startled us. It was the double-latch door which we had entered from, and we jumped up, slamming the door shut, silently promising I would come back for the poor cat. And figure out what was in there.

We realized that it was just our friends there, but me and Tara swore we would not bring it up to them. We ordered pizza and played simple card games, laughing at every snarky remark Thomas, (my crush) made. Time flew by and they left around 1:30am. Hearing John's old rusty minivan leave the vacant parking, Tara and I sprung into action. We jiggled the keys into the doorknob and explored some more. I looked for the box with the blood trail, while Tara fed her small granola bar to the cat, which we named "Midnight". I discovered a journal and carefully pulled it out, placing everything back into its original spot. It was by the name Adam Hanket. I opened it, to where Tara and I read the first entry.

*October 21<sup>st</sup>.*

*I did it. I murdered her. After a year of planning. I hid her dead body near the woods on the freeway. It's been a month now, and –*

I jumped at the sudden movement. Looking up from the book, Tara and I shared a worried look as the big, grey door shook, awaiting its opening. "Go Tara, over there!" I whisper-yelled. We hid behind an old couch and a few boxes and bookcases, while the door opened. I was about to yell and scream at whoever this old guy was for invading, but realized it was probably his unit. I could tell Tara was scared and would most likely scream at any sudden movement this man made. Through the boxes and books, I tried to make out his face. And suddenly, my heart stopped. That was Adam Hanket.

My hands were shaking as I covered my mouth, watching him through an old wool blanket. This moment felt like a sauna. Hot. Sweaty. Uncomfortable. Without notice, Midnight jumped onto my lap, purring and rubbing against my off the shoulder sweater. This unanticipated motion caused me to scream, and I watched Adam look around, seeming angry and drunk. He wobbled over to where we hid as he

screamed, “Where are you robbers?” He waved a knife around. Tara started crying and gripping my hand with all of her might, and I quickly thought of something to do.

People say that they freeze, or they cannot move or speak when in a scary situation. Not me, though. I yanked Tara up and ran for the open door, dodging the box that got us into this position. I was so close. *So close*. Suddenly, the agonizing pain of a knife cut through my leg, as Tara hurried out of the room. Out of the corner of my eye. I saw him, holding the knife that had just sliced through my calf. Grunting and pleading, I crawled to the door, my lungs burning and heat filling my leg. I looked around for the nearest weapon, something I was taught to always do in any situation, just in case. I saw a baseball bat, with dried blood on it. I gagged at the sight, but picked it up and stood, limping on my one good leg. I wacked him from behind and watched him fall, stumbling and struggling to stand up. I knew I didn’t have much time, so I slowly lurched toward the door, midnight in hand, where I met Tara with red cheeks and mascara-filled eyes. I yelled at her that we had to leave. *Now*. I heard a sudden yell and looked behind my shoulder, he was there. He was running- well, tripping towards us. Tara and I locked hands as I put midnight in my large tote bag. We sprinted toward the exit, where police officers met us. I looked at Tara confused as she handed me my charger. We smiled at each other, though we had almost just died.

At the hospital, my leg was stitched, but I was still on watch. I facetimed Tara to watch the court hearing for Adam Hanket, where he was charged guilty for murder of Isabella Hanket, and attempted murder of me. Tara was left unscathed, but she is very emotional, so it took a big toll on her. I say ‘bye’ into the phone to Tara, who is holding up a little heart signal, and I extend my hand to show a view of Midnight, purring up against me. Tara air kisses me goodbye and promises to visit me later. *The End*.

