

The Lost Piece from Albemarle

Cheng Guo - 11/3/2017



Picture source: <https://www.planomatic.com/mls8171>

Albemarle is the name of the main building at my high school campus. This is a short horror story I wrote for Halloween!

On a nameless hill in the middle of New Jersey, there is a small school, a place that nobody talks about. A highway named Lambert Drive surrounds the hill separating the campus from the outside world. The main building, called Albemarle, was the house of Sir Gerald Lambert, the owner of a local pharmaceutical company. According to the Internet, Gerald was an extraordinary physician who used his talent to make himself a fortune in the New World. He has stored some of the products from his company in the basement of Albemarle.

I arrived at this place when I was 16 as a high school student. Before I arrived here, I heard one of the most nonsense saying from words the graduate students of this school. They say that whenever there is a blackout, the old

drugs stored underground would volatilize and mix with the air to spread an oppressive gas among everyone living on the campus every single day. Most people would go crazy when they choked on this mysterious gas. They will not remember what they did when they were under the control of the gas. There will always be somebody who disappeared strangely from time to time and no one knows why. Even the graduate students could not figure out the reason. This phenomenon was first discovered by the American Boychoir School which settled here before. After their conductor went missing, they could not take it anymore and abandoned the place. Now, an international school has been established on this wasteland and students from all over the world have come here to study.

Although the mysterious gas spreads all over the campus every day, and people have gone missing for no reason, I did not think that would affect my study life here. I have read so many scientific magazines and stories, and I am a complete atheist. Every drug has its biological nature and nothing could affect a human so badly that causes him or her to forget everything. I am a science student and I should never believe those rumors.

By the time I arrived at the campus for the first time, I was warmly welcomed by the students there. Nothing feels wrong to me. One day after two months, my friend Sebastian told me that he had asked maintenance people here to check whether there could be a blackout, and I was laughing at him, calling him a coward. Everybody in this school was nice and friendly, and even if there is a blackout, I believe that nobody is going to harm me.

Last Thursday there was a blackout, I hid in a dark corner of the first floor of Albemarle out of curiosity. The security guard has turned off all the lights, leaving only me in the main building. Swaying in a classroom, I found the floor beneath me is loose. When I stepped on it, it shook and made weird sounds. I tried to remove that floor board but then suddenly, the window's blind was opened and the moonlight illuminated the classroom. Although I admit I was a little bit afraid, I have to say that if somebody tries to trick me, he or she did a wonderful job. I would just go to check what went wrong myself.

EXIT.

Weird, I have never paid any attention to that sign before. But just when I turned around to close the blinds, it showed up to me. It was pure red, like a sun shining in the sky, like the points minuses from my test paper, like blood flow on the wall. It does not matter, I thought, I finally got some free time just for myself, and I was going to enjoy it. Closing the blind, I told myself that nothing could be explained by science.

The floorboard piece was still shaking and making weird sounds when I stepped on it again. No one could stop me now, I thought, so I levered the floorboard myself.

Oh my god, what a wonderful smell! It smelled delicious as if it came from a feast hosted by the nobles. A guy was lying down there. Who was that lucky folk? He was wearing a tuxedo and holding a stack of music scores at his elbow. There was a golden baton in his hand and, as I touched that baton, it was still warm, and the guy was still alive! I use my hand to flip over his body. The face of the conductor finally showed in front of me - it was a bloodless, rusty skeleton face.

I ran as fast as I could to the front door. I could not see, hear, or think about anything. As I ran out of the Albemarle, I found myself running into a whole new Albemarle, with the rooms the same as the old Albemarle. Without thinking for another second, I ran to the back door of this Albemarle. Then I ran into another Albemarle from the front door again. After running for at least half an hour, I felt so tired. I do not know what drove me to the classroom I found the conductor's body, but I lay my body there, knowing nothing about what happened next.

OK, seems like this is a very funny atheist. His experience is just so ridiculous. I have finished the last page of his diary. The evening study hall has finished, and it was unusual that no security guard comes today to lock the Albemarle. As I stepped out of the classroom, I stumbled over this mysterious diary book. It recorded something really interesting. Oh, the floorboard beneath my feet must be loosened, it is making strange sounds.