

Resemblance

I stare into pleading eyes. The sound of his heavy breathing reminds me of my own. I feel the punches hit my own gut as my fist meets his scrawny abdomen. Is this what it feels like? Bulk up...

His words ring in my ear as they leave my own mouth.

The hook creaks like heavy boots on wooden floors. The mesh bag imprisoning him resembles the framed jerseys on my wall...

Reflections on them warned me when the light grew from creeping in to revealing my muddy Chuck Taylors. No longer short enough to hide under the bed.

I see my height in the mirror, shocking for an eighth grader. Getting taller, becoming more like him. My green eyes meet his in the mirror, then shift to the boy's in the bag. Is that what I looked like? Leave him for now...

Alone afterwards, no one hears. Left to process the pain. The anger.

I hear my name sound on the intercom as I parade the hallways, searching for another recipient of my vengeance. The sound of his voice makes me cringe. I see the office assistant heading towards me at an urgent pace, she reminds me of my darling mother. So unfortunately unaware. She grabs my wrist and leads me into his office. The secret kept between us steals my breath as I stare into his eyes...

Her caring eyes were trusting. She believed me when I told her about a fight. I was scrawny then too. As long as you stay in school she always said, knowing boys will be boys. Don't kill, don't die, stay in school.

He's the principal. How did that happen? I receive the news of suspension with mixed feelings. This could be the end of it all. Or the beginning...

I remember the first time. I forgot to walk the new puppy and it peed on my father's new briefcase. The same black bag he totes around still, weathered and stuffed. The hit was loud and abrupt. My lip cracked as skin collided and blood crawled down my chin. My mother had seen that time. His quick eyes rushed to hers in hope of mercy for just this once. But he made sure she never saw again.

I haven't seen him again. It's been seven days and I haven't been home. No school, no refuge, no relief. I only lurk in the shadows after the bell rings, waiting to capture victims with my unmatchable strength. Like his...

He grabbed her arm then hurriedly corrected the force with gentleness. Blaming it on the stress of a new position. Principal. Who chose him?

I don't pick the smallest and most susceptible. But the confident one. The one most unsuspecting. He needs to learn, it's a tough life. He thinks he can handle the real world until the tears begin to flow. Buck up...

His voice usually broke my tears. He always told me to suck it up. That one day I'd learn to be tough like life. That one day I'd be more like him.

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