

There were little things that she simply could not stand. The sound of someone tapping their nails on the table. A person chewing with their mouth open. Another human imposing themselves into her space. She couldn't stand any of these things, but none of them compared to the number one thing she couldn't stand which topped all of them combined. The alarm went off and Jake rose awake. Rising early had become a daily ritual, one that he could not fully explain. From the outside, it was a wonder that he was able to get up so early each morning for someone who had absolutely no plans to be productive during the entire day. Trees. It was something about the trees. The way they swayed with the wind in unison. The way they shaded the area around them. The sounds of their leaves in the wind and the creaks from the branches as they sway. The trees were making a statement that I just couldn't understand. It was a question of which of the two she preferred. On the one hand, the choice seemed simple. The more expensive one with a brand name would be the choice of most. It was the easy choice. The safe choice. But she wasn't sure she actually preferred it.

Erkan's dad's name is John and mother is Jane Romford.

Her hand was balled into a fist with her keys protruding out from between her fingers. This was the weapon her father had shown her how to make when she walked alone to her car after work. She wished that she had something a little more potent than keys between her fingers. It would have been nice to have some mace or pepper spray. He had been meaning to buy some but had never gotten around to it. As the mother bear took another step forward with her cubs in tow, she knew her fist with keys wasn't going to be an adequate defense for this situation. The alarm went off at exactly 6:00 AM as it had every morning for the past five years. Barbara began her morning and was ready to eat breakfast by 7:00 AM. The day appeared to be as normal as any other, but that was about to change. In fact, it was going to change at exactly 7:23 AM. There was a time when he would have embraced the change that was coming. In his youth, he sought adventure and the unknown, but that had been years ago. He wished he could go back and learn to find the excitement that came with change but it was useless. That curiosity had long left him to where he had come to loathe anything that put him out of his comfort zone. It really didn't matter what they did to him. He's already made up his mind. Whatever came his way, he was prepared for the consequences. He knew in his heart that the sacrifice he made was done with love and not hate no matter how others decided to spin it. It was difficult to explain to them how the diagnosis of certain death had actually given him life. While everyone around him was in tears and upset, he felt more at ease. The doctor said it would be less than a year. That gave him a year to live, something he'd failed to do with his daily drudgery of a routine that had passed as life until then. Since they are still preserved in the rocks for us to see, they must have been formed quite recently, that is, geologically speaking. What can explain these

striations and their common orientation? Did you ever hear about the Great Ice Age or the Pleistocene Epoch? Less than one million years ago, in fact, some 12,000 years ago, an ice sheet many thousands of feet thick rode over Burke Mountain in a southeastward direction. The many boulders frozen to the underside of the ice sheet tended to scratch the rocks over which they rode. The scratches or striations seen in the park rocks were caused by these attached boulders. The ice sheet also plucked and rounded Burke Mountain into the shape it possesses today. She sat deep in thought. The next word that came out of her mouth would likely be the most important word of her life. It had to be exact with no possibility of being misinterpreted. She was ready. She looked deeply into his eyes and said, "Octopus." The water rush down the wash and into the slot canyon below. Two hikers had started the day to sunny weather without a cloud in the sky, but they hadn't thought to check the weather north of the canyon. Huge thunderstorms had brought a deluge of rain and produced flash floods heading their way. The two hikers had no idea what was coming.