



SCHOOL SPIRIT

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It Was Daniel's first day of school. Daniel rode with his mother to Eastside High School. As they reached the front driveway of the school Daniel couldn't believe his eyes... the school looked like an old abandoned warehouse.

There was police caution tape hanging from the dead bushes in front of the school. All of the school windows were boarded up. The grass was covered in trash, the school sign was missing letters and read as "**W LCOME TO EAS SIDE HIGH SCHO L**". And on top of all that, Daniel appeared to be the only kid going to the school.

Daniel looked over at his mother as if begging to go to another school, and she, looking just as bewildered as her son, said "I'm sorry you have to go this school Daniel, but it's supposed to be the only school for miles." "But im the ONLY kid going here mom!" Daniel argued. "Oh no, i'm late for work! I have to get to work sweetie, see you at 2:00!"

As soon as Daniel stepped into the school he new something was very wrong... the halls were completely empty and Daniel was beginning to think that he really WAS the only kid going to the school. Daniel continued to walk down the halls looking at his schedule. The paint on the walls of the hall was chipped off and was yellow underneath.

Daniel found his first class in room 218, the teacher's name was Mrs. Jamison. He stepped inside and looked around, at first he didn't see anything because the classroom was pitch dark, but the dim light from the hallway shown in and he could make out faces of about ten or fifteen other students. Suddenly a womans deep voice broke the silence of the class. "Is your name Daniel White?" she asked. "Yes Maim." Daniel answered. "Take a seat in the last chair of the 5th row." Daniel walked to the back of the class and took his seat, he looked around at the other kids and gasped.

All of the other students were pale as sheep and had deep bloody gashes on their faces. It did not look like any of them had tried to clean their wounds or bandage them. All of their clothes were old, yellowed, and torn up with no brand name on them. They looked straight ahead as if waiting for orders from the teacher.

As Daniel was sitting in dismay someone grabbed his shoulder... Daniel spun around quickly to see who, or what, it was. Daniel's eyes opened wide as he looked at the student sitting beside him. He now noticed that these were not ordinary people. Daniel could see THROUGH this student all the way to the other side of the room...

The boy spoke in a whisper and said "My name's Jeffrey, what are you doing here? You are not welcome, you are not one of us, you must leave as soon as you can, so your life will be spared..." Daniel turned away from the boy and looked up at the clock. The bell was about to ring. He looked back at Jeff and started to ask him something.

"Jeffrey...why are all the kids in this class pale and why can I see through you? Am I seeing things?" The class bell rang just as Daniel was about to finish his questioning. Jeffrey got up quickly and followed the other kids out of the class. Daniel grabbed his book bag and walked out into the hall. He noticed all of the other kids staring at him like HE was different, but he ignored them.

Daniel wanted to get out of the creepy school as soon as possible, but he knew that he had to go to all four of his classes. The day passed by and all of Daniels classes were the same as his first class with all of the students looking so pale and scary. Daniel kept to himself, and after his fourth class he walked to his new locker.

Daniel opened it and grabbed the books he needed for homework and then slammed the door back shut and started to walk away. Daniel stopped and walked back to his locker to grab his math book he had forgotten. Daniel started to shut the door, but stopped again when he saw a note taped to the inside of the door...

Daniel looked around to see if anyone was watching him and then he grabbed the note off of the locker and ran home to read it. He knew he would be safe in his own home. On the way to his

house he remembered those strange, creepy words Jeffrey had said, "...you must leave as soon as you can, so your life will be spared."

And what did he mean by Daniel "was not one of them"? Daniel thought. Well, it was obvious to Daniel that he looked totally different than everyone at that school, but why was his life at risk?" Daniel ran up to his room and threw his book bag down. He searched his pocket and grabbed the note that was in his locker. He unfolded it and began to read the scribbled red letters. "Who are you? What are you doing in our school? You are not wanted, you are not one of us, you must leave now or you will become one of us. GET OUT NOW!!!" Daniel read aloud.

Daniel finished reading and tore the note into tiny pieces and dropped it into his garbage can. Daniel went down to the dining room and ate supper without speaking to his mom or dad. He walked back up to his room and started to unpack his book bag and repack it with the things he needed the next day.

Daniel turned to go sharpen a pencil when something caught his eye that was sitting on his desk. It was a small slip of paper. He went over to it and picked it up. He gasped and dropped the paper to the floor. It was the same one he had just thrown in the garbage and tore into tiny pieces. Back in one piece.

The next day Daniel went straight to Mrs. Jamison's class. He tried talking to Jeffrey again but the teacher warned him to stop talking. All of his other classes were pretty normal if you look past the fact of the children all being pale and transparent. Daniel walked to his locker, turned the combination, and opened it up.

Daniel grabbed his hat and his books. When Daniel picked up his science textbook, something slid off of it and banged onto the metal locker bottom. Daniel squinted in the dark of his locker and saw something shining.

He reached in and grabbed it. It was a blue emerald attached to a necklace. Daniel rolled the emerald in his hand and found that it was as cold as ice! Daniel shrugged and put the necklace around his neck. "Lets hope it's good luck." Daniel said aloud with hope.

The next day Daniel found out just how lucky the necklace really was. First, he was late for school, his alarm clock broke, and so did his mother's. He thought that was very strange. But once he got to school, things got a lot worse for Daniel.

When Daniel sat down after explaining his tardiness to the teacher he noticed Jeffrey looking at him. "Whats Up Jeff?" Daniel greeted him. "What's that under your shirt?" Jeffrey asked with a confused look on his face. "Oh, it's the strangest thing..." Daniel said as he pulled the necklace out from under his shirt.

"I found this in my locker yesterday, I've never seen it before in my life!" Daniel said. Jeffrey opened his eyes wide looking at the necklace and then at Daniel. "I TOLD YOU TO GET OUT OF THE SCHOOL! NOW IT'S TOO LATE! WHY DIDN'T YOU LISTEN TO ME?" Jeffrey whispered angrily through gritted teeth.

Daniel started to ask what Jeffrey meant by all the crazy things he had been telling him about being spared, and needing to get out of the school, but the bell rang just before he said a word. As usual, Jeffrey followed the class out as fast as he could, but this time he looked back and stared at Daniel as he walked away slowly.

At the end of the day Daniel went to his locker and hesitantly opened it, expecting to see something inside, but nothing was there except his books. he grabbed them and stuffed them in his book bag. He then reached in to grab his hat, but before he could, the locker door slammed shut on Daniel's arm. Daniel cried out in pain and looked to see who did it, but the hall was completely empty.

Daniel was walking home stroking his arm thinking about whether or not he should tell his mom about the crazy things that had been happening to him. He wasn't paying attention to where he was walking and he walked right off of the sidewalk and onto the street. Suddenly a horn honked and knocked Daniel out of his daze. He looked up to see a green minivan four feet in front of him! He jumped out of the way just in time and slammed back onto the sidewalk.

The man in the minivan drove by and yelled to Daniel to watch where he was walking. Daniel got up, shivering with the thought of almost being killed. Daniel wiped off his elbow, pulled himself up and continued walking home. The next day, he became even more acquainted with death.

The next day, Daniel didn't feel like going to school because of all the strange things that had been going on. But of course, he had to. His first class was, as usual, Mrs. Jamison's class. He wanted to switch seats that day but at the same time, he wanted to try and figure out what Jeffrey was talking about all the time.

He sat down and Jeffrey looked over at him. As soon as he saw Daniel he sneered and looked away. But then he turned back and started to tell Daniel something, "Well, I warned you, but now it's too late. You were stupid. You didn't listen to me. It's too bad really. Because, there won't be a second chance to listen to me."

Daniel had been waiting for this moment. He started questioning Jeffrey. "Listen kid, you've been telling me all these crazy things ever since the first day of school. I have NO idea what you are talking about, so could you please explain it to me?" Jeffrey sighed and after a long wait, began explaining what had been going on with Daniel.

"Ok, first of all, when I said you weren't one of us, I meant it. You probably noticed how pale and scarred up looking we are. Well, that's because...we're not alive anymore Daniel." Jeffrey told Daniel. "Huh?" Daniel couldn't believe what he was hearing. "Exactly like I said, we are dead. Couldn't you have guessed that?"

Daniel stared at Jeffrey a second before a smile crossed his face. "So, lemme get this straight, your saying that your DEAD dead? All these kids at this school just up and died one day?" Jeffrey sighed again and then replied, "Please believe me Daniel. Just let me finish." Daniel, still smiling, nodded for Jeffrey to continue.

"You got that emerald necklace out of your locker, right?" "Yep." "Well, that necklace carries a curse that has been given to all the new students to this school. When you wear the necklace, the curse takes about 3 days to set in. Then you will begin to change overnight. From alive...to dead." The smile disappeared from Daniel's face. "I hate to be the one to tell you this...but, in about 8 or 9 more hours you will be one of us."

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That night Daniel couldn't sleep. He found it hard to believe that he would be dead and roaming school grounds the next morning. He really wanted to tell his Mom or Dad about it, but he knew they wouldn't believe him. And Daniel was now riding the bus to school, so he never saw either one of them during the day long enough to speak to them.

Finally Daniel dozed off after reading a couple pages of his new book. The next morning Daniel woke up and had forgotten all about being dead. He sat up on his bed, looked around and then remembered what Jeffrey said. Daniel shook his head and snickered. "I'm still here Jeffrey!" Daniel thought. "Jeffrey sure has a good imagination."

Daniel scratched his head and went to the bathroom to brush his teeth. He opened the mirrored cabinet and grabbed his toothbrush. Daniel closed his eyes and slowly brushed his teeth, not looking forward to school. Daniel swished the toothpaste and spit it out. Daniel then felt a sharp pain in the left side of his mouth.

"Ow!" Daniel cried out. Daniel tasted blood and suddenly his tooth just fell loose from his mouth. "Huh? Strange..." Daniel moved his tongue around his mouth and tasted even more bitter blood. "Oh sick..." Daniel spit the mouthful of dark crimson blood into the sink. Daniel looked up at the mirror and opened his mouth.

Daniel shook his head, wide eyed and cried out, "No! No, this can't be happening, this has to be a joke or something!" Daniel's face was covered in scars with dark reddish blood smeared across them. Daniel rubbed one of the scars, but he felt no pain. Daniel looked at the blood on his hand. It was warm, it was certainly not a joke, as Daniel had hoped. It was pure blood.

Daniel then realized Jeffrey had been telling the truth all along. 'I was so stupid, just like Jeffrey said, I should have got out of the school as soon as I could. I should have never put that dumb emerald necklace around my neck.' Daniel thought. Daniel noticed his face was no longer tanned. It was as pale white as notebook paper. Daniel shook his head again.

"Well, that's it, I'm dead now. But..." Daniel said aloud. Suddenly a thought crossed Daniel's mind. He thought that maybe there was some way he could reverse his death. But then he remembered all the kids at school. They would have already changed back to being alive by now if they could have.

Daniel trudged back to his room and pulled on his clothes. He decided to skip breakfast. 'What's the point, I probably couldn't taste it anyway.' Daniel thought. He walked out to the bus stop and came to the sad realization that he would never be a normal kid again.

He could no longer do the things that he had enjoyed. A tear emerged from Daniel's eye as he realized that he was now dead forever. 'This is the end...' Daniel thought. 'I HAVE to talk to Jeffrey today. He may be my last and only hope...'

Daniel missed the bus, so he had to walk to school that day. As Daniel walked down the street, people passed by in cars and stared directly at Daniel's hideous scars and raggedy clothes. One

kid even started crying when he saw Daniel. Daniel frowned and started a fast jog to school. When Daniel finally reached school he found out he was two minutes late. The teacher marked his tardy and told him to sit down and start the assignment that was written on the board.

As soon as Daniel took his seat he began questioning Jeffrey. "You were right, I'm dead now. But I HAVE to stop this. People are scared of me, and I'm falling apart! Tomorrow I'll probably be in a wheelchair! Please tell me some way to turn back to a normal 16 year old."

"Alright," Jeffrey began to answer "I know how to get rid of this evil cursed necklace... But it obviously won't be easy. If you do destroy it, we will all be normal once again. Will you do it for all of us? It could be dangerous..." Daniel shook his head yes and answered, "Of course... I can't live like this anymore."

Jeffrey told Daniel a long plan about how to destroy the emerald necklace and reverse the Eastside High School curse that had ruined students lives forever. As soon as Daniel got home he started the plan by putting the necklace in his freezer right before he went to bed.

Daniel put the necklace on the top shelf. Then Daniel turned the knob in the freezer to 16 Degrees, the lowest setting, and closed the freezer door. He ran back upstairs and went to sleep planning out the end of the terrible curse that had plagued students of Eastside forever.

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When Daniel woke up the next morning, he had it all planned out. He pulled on his clothes quickly and ran down the steps to the refrigerator. He reached in and carefully picked up the emerald necklace, it was ice cold and frozen. Ice crystals hung down from it. He grabbed the garage door opener and went outside to the garage.

Daniel then opened the garage and grabbed his bike. He jumped on and started pedaling down the street. He reached into his pocket and pulled out a scrap piece of notebook paper. He skimmed it and read off an address out loud. "3627 North Commons Street... right there..." Daniel turned on North Commons Street and looked for Jeffrey's house.

"3622, 24, 26, 27." Daniel turned into Jeffrey's driveway. He jumped off the bike and let it slam to the ground. Daniel walked to Jeffrey's backyard. Jeffrey was laying on a hammock reading a video game magazine. He looked up and then jumped up off the hammock and ran over to him. "Did you do it?" Jeffrey asked Daniel.

Daniel showed him the necklace. "Good, lets go." Jeffrey ran to the side of his house and came back seconds later on his bike. They rode toward Eastside High School. When they finally reached Eastside they kept riding around to the back of the school. They pedaled into the dark woods behind Eastside. Jeffrey soon got off his bike and started looking around. He pointed to a strange blue rock laying on its side.

"There it is." Jeffrey told Daniel. They walked over to the rock that matched the necklace. Daniel reached down to touch the smooth blue colored rock. It was ice cold, just like the necklace. He then pulled out the necklace that had started to thaw, and handed it to Jeffrey. "OK, this is it." He handed it back to Daniel. "You have to do it, I can't. You were the last one to become dead thanks to this thing."

"Right." Daniel nodded and followed Jeffrey's directions. Jeffrey pulled out a slip of crumbled paper and told Daniel what to do. "It says here, the only way to end this curse is to sling the frozen emerald toward this blue rock." Daniel took the emerald necklace and gripped it in his hand. "No more... no more..." Daniel said as he pitched the necklace as hard as he could at the blue rock.

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The emerald struck the blue rock, and made a loud crack that echoed throughout the woods. Daniel and Jeffrey exchanged glances when they saw that the emerald was unbroken. "Nothing happened!!" Daniel yelled -- but he was interrupted by another loud crack followed by a number of bright flashes that lit up the entire woods.

Daniel shielded his eyes as the flashes blinded him. Suddenly, Daniel felt a hard force pick him up and slam him into a tree! The tree shook and Daniel slid down the tree to the ground. The flashes continued as Daniel sat watching everything fade to black... Soon Daniel was awoken by Jeffrey. It was pitch dark outside, but Daniel could make out his face. Daniel gasped in shock when he saw Jeffrey.

Jeffrey was back to normal again, and was no longer scarred up. Plus, he had new clothes on. "YES!" Daniel cried out, as he looked at his own hands to see that they were back to normal again. He was no longer dead. Daniel sat up and looked over at the blue rock. The emerald necklace was shattered into tiny pieces that were scattered all over the rock's surface.

Daniel smiled and pulled himself up. They jumped on their bikes and rode home. As they slowly pedaled out of the forest, they did not notice the emerald necklace begin reconnecting it's pieces back together. The next day at school, everyone was happy and normal again. The students were

all no longer zombies, or ghosts, or whatever they had been before. They were normal skin color again. It was all back to normal at the school, and Daniel was beginning to enjoy it.

After school that day, Daniel went into his room and found a small piece of blue paper lying on his desk. What's this? Daniel thought. He dropped his book bag to the floor and picked up the paper lying on his desk. He read it to himself.

"YOU CANNOT STOP THE CURSE. THE EMERALD NECKLACE CANNOT BE DESTROYED.
YOU MIGHT AS WELL GIVE UP NOW AND LEAVE THE SCHOOL IF YOU WANT TO SPARE
YOURSELF FROM FURTHER TORTURE..."

"NOOOOO!!!" Daniel yelled. He ran downstairs with the note and, hands trembling, grabbed the scissors. Just as he started to slice the paper in half, the phone rang. He jumped at the sound, and picked up the phone. "HELLO??" Daniel yelled into the phone. "Jeez! What's wrong with you?" Daniel recognized the voice. It was his friend Jerry from where Daniel used to live.

"Jerry? Is that you? Sorry man, what do you want?" "Oh, I was gonna tell you...I'm moving in to Eastside!!!" Jerry told Daniel excitedly. "That's cool man!" Daniel replied. "Yep, and I'm going to your school! And guess what? I just found this really cool necklace in my new locker! This is gonna be the best, huh Daniel?" Daniel gulped into the phone and managed to stutter, "Yeah, the best..."

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