50 ‘Don’t Look Now’

It’s April fourth, the day my past became my future. I’m currently sitting across from a slightly larger lady with thin framed spectacles, which for the most part resembles that of my year seven head teacher. The room is clinically white and the only furniture are three odd shaped cacti on the window sill, two black leather chairs that are occupied and a small round coffee table separating me and fire-haired lady. I get distracted by the rain outside, its’ calming, the pitter-patter is like hypnotic music; however I’m abruptly brought back to reality with a high pitch squeal , “so how did that make you feel?” I’m confused, I am numb, my mind is blind and I cannot give her what she is asking me for. What is she asking me for? I start to scratch at the arm of the leather chair as she continues; “start from the beginning”.

Although I feel this is more of a demand than a request, I proceed anyway, “well I only really remember as far back as when I was eight.” She throws me a puzzled look, so I echo confusion straight back at her. In all honesty I don’t really remember must from my past; I can’t even remember what I had for breakfast let alone twenty years ago! The room halts to a deadly silence, I start getting fidgety as I have to keep tucking my silky, purple hair behind my ears. I direct my eye line back to the rain still hammering on the window; the leather feels soft against my fingertips as my scratching begins to turn into a gentle stroke. My blank expression is giving her no hope so she says, “we’re going to try an exercise, lay back and close your eyes”. I can’t help but think; is she going to try and send me to my ‘happy place’?

She starts playing this soothing ocean sea music, which reminds me of the local massage parlour; I begin to feel more uncomfortable and start scraping the chair again as she whispers, “and relax”. She’s asking me question after question and breathing unrealistically deep putting me more on edge than before. Her soft, breathy voice instructs “think back to when you were a child”. This is all new to me; I feel like a naive gazelle about to get attacked like some sort of prey, but I realise I am paying for this so I might as well indulge. My mind begins to drift as I start to feel cold sweat running down my face, I can feel my body shutting down slowly, as though someone is switching off a light.

All I see is darkness with a small spec of light in the distance; I start to travel toward the brightness. Suddenly I’m in a living room, I’m perched on the stairs; I’m confused; I notice a small ginger cat by the fireplace licking its paws in arrogance. The furniture is out dated and covered in ugly peach patterned fabric; the front door directly in front of me has five stain glassed windows and the stench of smoke from the fireplace mixed with jasmine air freshener consumes my nostrils. I hear muttering, but it’s so faint I can’t quite make it out. I look up to the landing to see four blank white doors, I’m curious. I stand up and as I do the floorboards from underneath me creek and I hear a voice, “whose that?”

I franticly run up the stairs and leap into one of the polished white doors; it reveals a room dressed in pale pink; a small teddy-bear guards the bed like a military solider and the walls are covered in my little pony posters. I’ve been here before. The overwhelming sense of joy and pain rushes through me like a wave. I slowly saunter over to the window and look out on the empty street, it’s dark and the only light is coming from the street lamps illuminating the road in orange. I recognise this road. As I start to feel nostalgic I hurriedly escape back to the landing. The muttering I heard earlier has become louder and harsher; I sheepishly make my way down the stairs tip-toeing constantly. I reach the bottom, I feel something fluffy wrapping itself around my leg, it’s the cat from before; I bend down, pick it up and plonk myself into the plumped peach cushions as I caress its soft fur. It takes a long stretch and starts scratching the arm of the chair. I hear an unexpected crash, although I am scared and apprehensive I remove the animal from my lap and glide across the floor towards the noise. Another crash, the cat hisses and scarpers up the stairs. Another crash, I push against the heavy brown door, I see a body. Two bodies. I recognise these people. As tears begin to fill my eyes and my vision goes blurry I wake up, my face damp.

I remember now and everything has changed.