

The Organist

My tale is a peculiar and macabre one. I sometimes doubt the validity of the details of it myself as anyone who hears of it has an instantaneous reaction of astonishment followed by the standard shaking of the head and mutterings of disbelief. Many say I have lost my mind, others say it's just a sick way of trying to get off lightly, then of course there are those who reckon I am just attempting to deal with the harsh reality of the events which happened on the night of October 18th, 2011 in whatever way I can. I implore you to approach this with an open mind, and if possible, be brave enough to accept the fact that I may just be telling the truth.

The aforementioned incident took place on a cold but sunny evening in the rural County Clare countryside. It was a fairly ordinary day but I remember a strange tingling present, almost an air of anticipation of events primed to unfold. Maybe that's only my feelings having the benefit of hindsight, but I remember there was just *something* about that particular day. I had struggled to complete the Nates account for a number of weeks up to this date. I spent many sleepless nights staring at the ceiling with numbers swirling around my head. I was an expert at 'creative bookkeeping' and this was one of the trickiest contracts my company had ever undertaken. I don't want to digress so to cut a long story short, I eventually cracked a way to meet our clients requests and I was looking forward to heading home to celebrate my hard earned achievement. I must have been too focused on making sure I definitely had everything right because when I snapped out of my thoughts, I realised that I had inexplicably become lost. I had spent the last few weeks driving home on a more scenic route to try and clear my head and

as a result, had become accustomed to the alternate routes through the picturesque countryside, however, on *this* day, I did not recognise the road I found myself on.

I tried to mentally retrace my steps but on account of my daydreaming I could barely even remember leaving the office, not to mention what route I had taken. I found myself on a long and winding narrow road, littered with potholes which caused me great concern for the suspension of my vintage Mazda 808 coupe. Although hopelessly lost, I couldn't help but admire the spectacular views of the surrounding valleys and tree speckled hills. As the sun began its descent, daylight started to fade, and the picturesque lush green surroundings slowly started to fade to black. I switched on my headlights, searching for a signpost or even a house to ask for directions. There hadn't been a sign of any form of civilisation for a long time by this stage and I was regretting my decision to take the rural route home. After rounding a particularly sharp bend, my car jolted violently and a loud crash shook the entire chassis. The old Mazda ground to a halt and subsequently died. I tried to restart it but to no avail. Puzzled as to what happened I exited the car to carry out an inspection.

There was no obvious signs of any major damage so I assumed one of those *craters* that pass as potholes around here had been responsible for my breakdown. I was never blessed with a mechanically orientated mind and so popping the bonnet would be only a mere formality as I would be unable to tell one part of the engine from the other, not to mention trying ascertain if there was anything amiss. The sun was, at this stage, almost entirely gone and the moon was now the primary source of illumination in absence of my headlights. I sat back into my car and wracked my brain trying to think of what to do. Off all of the days to forget my phone, this would have to be the one where I needed it the most. As I sat there and pondered my options, my bad luck was exacerbated by the sudden and eerily quick appearance of fog. It was thick, dense, and unrelenting. It appeared - seemingly from nowhere, enveloping my car, swallowing it

up and leaving me in an even more perilous situation than the one I previously found myself in. Should another vehicle follow my same path, there would almost inevitably be a collision. I remember feeling an unnerving sense of isolation and uncomfortable vulnerability shrouded in the midst of that fog which makes me shudder to this day. My car was completely dead, not even the hazard lights would work. I realised that I couldn't stay sitting there all night so I reluctantly made the decision to wait along the embankment or somewhere at least off the road and more sheltered. The fog had brought quite a chill with it and I needed to start moving to warm myself up.

Thinking it pointless to head backwards as I was already lost, I decided to move forward in the hope of stumbling across some form of life. Just as I began my arduous trek, I heard what sounded like my name being whispered through the fog. I stopped and listened intently, not knowing if it was only the gentle breeze rustling through the bushes or if I did in fact hear my name being called. I turned around and made my way back only to see the silhouette of a figure standing behind my recently abandoned car.

I went to step forward to greet them but stopped, noticing there was something off about this. *How did they know my name?* I decided to make my greetings from a distance for now but my calls went unanswered. I tried again but to the same result. I strained my eyes to try to make out more detail on the person but they were shrouded in darkness, and the fog made it even more difficult to see anything. I cautiously moved closer to get a better look. The figure stood motionless in the middle of the road. As I approached I could make out slightly more detail - it seemed like they were wearing a long hooded trench coat or poncho as they were completely covered over. I can't emphasise enough how difficult it was to make anything out clearly. I called out once more but again, there was no reply. It was only after another few steps that it dawned on me and I had to stop. I studied the figure closely as best I could and noticed

that its proportions seemed unnatural, in fact, it's entire frame seemed distorted. I remember I could feel the hairs on the back of my neck stand tall and I got a sudden sickening gut feeling. Its arms were dangling almost past his knees, and it was bent forward with a massive hunch. It also appeared to have a lordotic twist back from the waist resulting in its body taking on a peculiar shape like that of a backward S. Another thing which struck me was its breathing, or lack thereof I should say. Its shoulders and chest were rising and falling but it seemed forced, too exaggerated as if it was only feigning the ability to breath.

I was now trembling, frantically battling irrational thoughts, trying to convince myself that it could very well be just an illusion as a result of the fog. *Don't be so silly.* In circumstances such as this it is quite easy to let your imagination run wild and see only what you want, but all it took was for the mysterious stranger to take one laboured stride forward and without even thinking - I turned and ran. It was very difficult to see and I tried my best to follow the road in poor visibility but it seemed to just disappear right from beneath my feet, being suddenly replaced by soft damp grass. I powered on, adrenaline pumping through my body refusing to let me turn back to try to find the road. I could now just about make out that I was in a field but was unable to determine its size. It seemed to be sprawling endlessly, incredibly flat with no distinct bushes, rocks, trees or landmarks of any kind. Nothing only grass - which was getting longer and thicker the further I progressed. Eventually though, around the time the grass got to roughly knee height, I saw a massive darkness penetrating the thick blanket of fog, for ahead of me loomed a large forest.

It was dark, ominous and definitely didn't look inviting but there didn't seem to be much of a choice - it was either enter, or risk stumbling into that ghoul like stranger again in the fog. Neither option was ideal but I waded my way through the grass until I reached the perimeter of the forest. I made my way in through the trees, dodging branches and old rotting bark on the

moss covered ground until I could proceed no more. I halted, needing to rest, and took the opportunity to scan in between trees for any sign of movement. *Had I been followed?* - More importantly - *if I had - then by whom? And how did they know my name?*

I started to ponder, trying to think about what to do. I had always struggled under intense pressure but this was unprecedented and my mind was totally blank. At this point in time, I was pretty confident that I had not been followed, but now I was stranded in a forest in the middle of nowhere, with no way of calling for help. I had brief thoughts about making some sort of moss blanket for myself but I was no survivalist and started to doubt my ability to even last the night. Just as I was beginning to think that I was overreacting about the sinister intentions of the stranger, the crackling sound of some snapping twigs jerked me from my thoughts and back to reality. I looked up to see that same abhorrent figure approaching between trees. Its spasmodic gait made it appear to be lumbering slowly but in actual fact it was moving with considerable pace, albeit with seemingly great difficulty. There was something truly horrific about it and much worse was the fact that there was no doubt now that it was pursuing me. I didn't plan on sticking around to find out its intentions.

It's important to note that I'm referring to my pursuer as "it" and not "he" or "she" because if you saw the terrifying sight of it approaching, as much as my rational mind hates to admit, there would be no way anyone could refer to it as a Human person. The trees were too spread out to offer an adequate hiding place or even any sort of decent cover, so running seemed to be my only option and so I proceeded deeper into the forest. I ducked and dove between low lying branches and thankfully the fog seemed to be getting lighter the deeper I delved through the thickets. I was now more exposed but could travel faster with improved line of sight - a trade off I had no choice but to accept.

Never had I ran like this before and I was starting to get a stitch and was in dire need of rest when the trees started to part. Thankfully the fog had now all but lifted and before me lay a massive lake, glistening under moonlight. I had absolutely no idea where I was and a feeling of despair rapidly started to creep up on me. Far in the distance, across the water on the opposite bank, I could just about see faint flickering lights from what I could only assume was a building of some sort nestled in between the silhouettes of large trees. The lake seemed to be situated in a giant hollow basin in a valley, set against a backdrop of some awe inspiring misty mountains. It was a truly breathtaking view from what was visible but current circumstances dictated that getting to that building was paramount. The forest I stood at the edge of, followed the water line all the way around. I desperately needed to reach somebody. Rustling somewhere close by in the trees behind alerted me again to the apparent omnipresence of my pursuer. The ground sloped gently down towards the water and there lay a small wooden slipway on the shoreline. Miraculously, I spied a berthed old wooden rowing boat upon the waters' edge. My only options were to follow the forest along the shore to the other side or else cross by boat. Exhausted, the thought of reaching the far side on foot almost caused me to faint. I sprinted to the boat, shoving it into the water almost without breaking stride and bungled inside.

Thankfully there were oars on the deck as in my haste I had forgotten to check. I rowed frantically trying to get as much distance between myself and the shoreline as quickly as I possibly could. I hadn't rowed a boat since I was young and my embarrassing lack of upper body strength was painfully evident as I struggled to work the oars. It took me a few minutes to coordinate properly, but soon enough I got the hang of it - adrenaline spurred me on. All I needed now was just to get far enough out into the lake so I could confidently take a breather. When I was satisfied I was safe enough, I stopped rowing and stood up to quickly scan around from shore to shore - there didn't seem to be a sign of anyone. Silence.

Apart from the gentle rocking of the boat everything was perfectly still except for only the very slightest wisp of a breeze. There was no sign of my follower from the shore and I managed to relax a bit. My shoulders and arms ached so I tried to massage them. It was only through the calmness of the water that I could reflect on everything that had happened. I had been running on adrenaline all this time and this was the first opportunity I had to try to ratify my thoughts. I began to contemplate the idea of my car being deliberately sabotaged to strand me here. *But for what purpose?* As I wiped the sweat from my brow, I went to check my phone for reception. I frantically patted my pockets in a desperate search for my phone forgetting that I never had it in the first place. I cursed and took a deep breath, leaning back to look up at the stars.

As I sat there entranced by the hypnotic rocking I was roused when there was a small hollow thud against the hull, causing the boat to change direction and rock slightly. I cautiously peered over the edge looking for the cause - the last thing I needed now was to hit some rocks and sink. The water was dark and impossible to see through. Suddenly the boat jerked to the left, sending me flying onto the deck. One of the oars fell into the water and I just managed to scramble to my knees to catch the second. The boat began to rock violently and I was thrown back as water poured over the sides as a result of what seemed like a sudden tidal surge - although impossible in an isolated lake. I was drenched and as I wiped my eyes I noticed that the water had a red tint to it. I looked at my clothes and they were covered in what looked like dark blood. Adding to my horror, I looked up only to see a set of hands appear over the edges. Hands - with long gnarled fingers, covered with a layer of thin, almost translucent saggy skin clutching the edge of the boat as if getting a grip in order to hoist some hideous creature up. I tried to scream but was cut short as a sudden flood of water came gushing over the sides causing the

boat to capsize sending me tumbling into the ice cold water. I quickly surfaced and had time for only a single gasp of air before a vice-like grip upon my ankle dragged me down.

And down.

Further, into the depths of an abyss.

Hope was fading, along with what little light I could see still left shimmering on the surface. The silhouette of my capsized boat grew smaller and smaller as I was being pulled down deeper and deeper by phantoms unseen in the murky darkness. All of my struggling was futile, I could not escape - the hold upon my ankle was too tight. Even though I was immersed in freezing water the grip upon my leg was much colder, so cold in fact that it almost began to burn. In what I thought to be my final moments, there was no split second flashback of life events. No euphoric feeling. No sightings of a tunnel with light at the end. For me, my final thoughts were of dying at the hands of an inexplicable entity that would never be known and consumed by a sea of blood and darkness - alone, frightened and helpless. What an awful way to go.

I couldn't have imagined this morning when I left for work that it would be the last time I would ever hear my fiancé's voice on the phone as we fought over whether or not to attend her friend's party. I had hung up angry with her and now would not get to tell her how much I loved her one last time. Add to this so many unanswered questions about my pursuer and what exactly was going on and I could feel my blood start to boil. My aggravation turned into raw anger, which transformed into a final heroic explosion of energy.

This was not my time to die!

Everything seemed to flicker, flashes of light, bursts of noise. A burning feeling in my chest started shooting around my body. *Was I experiencing what dying feels like?* I kicked and struggled as hard as I could and somehow broke free from the deathly grip and propelled myself

frantically upwards. *This was not my time to die!* I could see my boat begin to come into view and grow larger as I approached the surface. With my last air expended I tried desperately to hold back my natural instinct to gasp for breath by closing my eyes and concentrating only on powering my arms and legs to thrust myself towards the boat. Just as I thought I couldn't hold on anymore, I broke the surface and with a gargantuan gasp, I had made it.

Coughing and spluttering I grabbed onto the boat, now upside down in the water and rested for a minute. The hull was stained a dark red and clumps of gore were stuck onto it but I couldn't afford to freak out now. I looked around to try to get my bearings. Luckily I seemed to have drifted closer to shore. I nearly got sick with the thought of whatever attacked me still lurked below, but I needed to make it to land as I wouldn't last much longer in this water. All of my muscles were seizing up but somehow I found the strength to propel myself towards the bank. After a few minutes, which seemed like hours, I finally felt ground beneath my feet and then dirt between my fingers and I grasped a hold for dear life.

I dragged myself onto land and collapsed. I lay there for what felt like an eternity, regaining my strength and catching my breath. I hadn't time to dwell as I was now starting to shiver violently as the cold started seeping into my bones - I *had* to move. I lifted myself up and staggered towards the tree line in a desperate hunt for the building which hopefully, was not too far away.

Hours seemed to pass as I traversed the woodland. It was still dark and everything looked the same making it difficult to identify which way I was going. My clothes were wet and permanently stained red, the putrid smell constantly made me gag and empty retch. Just as I began to wonder whether or not I was traveling in circles, I spotted the faint glow of light penetrating through leaves in the darkness ahead. As I got closer, the trees became more sparse until eventually I was out in the open. All the trees, shrubbery and foliage just seemed to stop at

an imaginary line and it was just me standing before a small Victorian looking chapel. There was a large stone wall separating me from the church which extended beyond the mainframe of the building looping around and surrounding it. The lights were on inside and shone brightly like a beacon of hope amidst the darkness trying desperately to consume it. A narrow rusted iron gate with overhanging trees lay towards one end looked likely to be the only way in, from this side at least. There was a small worn grassy path leading up towards the entrance which I duly followed. As I got closer I could hear the faint sound of what seemed like organ music emanating from within the confines of the church. The nearer I got the more clearly I could hear and it became apparent to me that it was not an average hymn that was being played. It sounded dark and gothic, and terribly out of tune. The result, as you can imagine, was an incredibly unsettling atmosphere. As I passed through the rusty gate, its hinges moaned and protested loudly as I entered what was a very old and dilapidated graveyard. The Organ abruptly stopped. I didn't move. The silence was almost deafening and the music did not resume.

The graveyard was in a bad state of neglect with many of the headstones starting to crumble into the overgrown grass around them. There was a broken up cobblestone path leading down the center and up towards the church. This looked to be the only planned layout in the entire yard, as every other headstone was just placed in what seemed like a random spot. With no organised rows of headstones or paths to walk around, one would almost certainly have had to step on top of multiple graves to reach a specific plot. I reluctantly followed the central path. I was never fond of graveyards but after all that I had experienced that day, I doubted it could get much worse. Passing by all the different graves, I noticed the headstones were so old that it was almost impossible to make out any inscriptions on most of them. The whole place must clearly have been very poorly maintained, but it being in such a remote location it didn't completely shock me that this was the case. As I approached the church entrance, there were two

graves at the end of the “row” that somehow caught my attention. Both had very new looking headstones. The closest one to me was filled in, but the other looked as if it was recently dug, waiting to be filled. The first Headstone was a shiny new black granite traditional style stone with thorns and nettles scattered around it. It read:

Anastasia Leanne Lemaire

Jan 14th 1990 - October 18th 2011.

That was the date that day, or the day before, depending on what time it was and how long I had spent traipsing through the forests and swimming in blood filled lakes. I remember thinking it unusual that a plot would be dug practically on the same day as a death. The next headstone, made of Grey granite, caused every hair on my body to stand upright and gave me the most awful, sickening feeling in the pit of my stomach. It read:

Philip Patrick Clarke

April 27th 1973 - October 18th 2011

My exact name and birthday. It chilled me to the bone and sent all sorts of thoughts flying through my head. I tried dismissing it as a freak coincidence but began to feel nauseous. I badly needed to just get inside. It felt like my entire reality was about to break.

Was I losing my mind?

A voice seemed to call me as I staggered towards the old church doors. The shooting pain in my chest was there again and as intense as ever, bringing me back to my near death in the lake. My vision was blurry with flickering lights half blinding me, meaning I could only manage to reach

the steps of the church door before vomiting. Fresh blood and froth stared up at me from my shirt and legs. I was still queasy but felt better for having cleared my stomach. I remember thinking hopefully the blood is only some of the "water" I swallowed from the lake. I wiped my mouth and got to my feet just as the organ piped up again.

I pulled open the large wooden doors expecting, rather naively, to see a full congregation but instead was greeted with rows of empty pews. Puzzled, I wearily entered.

The large doors slammed shut behind me but the music did not stop. It was not so much music but rather a constant monotonous drone, as if someone was resting on a group of organ keys continuously. The church felt warm and safe despite the unnerving music resounding from within. It appeared to be traditionally laid out with a nave down the center, an aisle on either side, and a north and south transept before the chancel. Old scratched wooden pews were positioned in rows on either side of the nave and were themselves decorated by a nice thick layer of dust. Large paintings placed in-between stained glass windows depicting various scenes from the bible hung on the stone walls. A fantastic giant wood carving sat behind the Priests pulpit. Wooden Buttresses spanned the ceiling above and appeared to be half rotting with large cobwebs spanning between each support.

The entire church was lit by hundreds of candles both hanging, and on the floor which gave out a surprisingly large amount of light and heat. I walked cautiously down the nave to explore where the music was originating from, it had to be from one of the transepts. As I approached the crossing, my peripheral vision picked up on movement on my right hand side. I turned to face the organist. What sat before me defied all logic and human understanding. Indeed, it was a sight so horrific, be thankful that you did not see it with your own eyes. It is hard to describe adequately in words yet I shall try my best to do justice to the grotesqueness which lay before me.

The organ was placed against the back wall facing me, with the large pipes stretching most of the way up to the ceiling. Sitting on a bench playing it, was a robed figure almost exactly like my pursuer. This, frightening as it may be, was not what paralysed me with sheer terror. It was the fact that while it played with its back to me, the head hung down its back, split from its shoulders and attached only by the thinnest of ligaments and stringy flesh and faced directly at me. The upside-down face was contorted and disfigured making it impossible to tell a gender but two dead soulless eyes glared deep into mine, and locks of long dirty blonde hair hung down, stained dark and knotted red with blood and grit. It stopped playing and slowly stood up. Reaching behind, it clasped its head with both hands and brought it up onto its shoulders, turning the head to face frontwards before pulling a hood over itself. It then spun around to face me. I tried to flee but I stayed rooted to the spot, for some reason I felt like I was inexorably drawn towards this malevolent fiend. I was certain that it was indeed the same creature which had tormented me and it limped menacingly closer.

With every step, I could feel my stomach knot more and the blood drain from my face as I collapsed to my knees - almost unable to look at the horror that approached. From the outline of the robes the creature's limbs appeared totally twisted and there were large spikes protruding from various points of its body. Its gigantic hump weighed down on its frame causing it to stoop over but the unnatural bend at its waist almost righted it back to a normal posture. It dragged its left leg, struggling to maintain its balance and as it put its weight down to walk, thick dark blood oozed from various orifices leaving a trail of sludge in its wake. When it finally reached me, I could not breathe with pure fright. It stood motionless for what seemed like an eternity before a series of sickening cracks began to emanate from beneath its clothes. Before my very eyes the beast started to spasm, dropping to its knees and writhing on the floor as if it was possessed by some unseen entity. It became apparent to me that it was somehow transforming itself.

From what I could see from the robe, its limbs seemed to be breaking and reattaching into place, blood and gore spewed out from underneath its garment as the large spikes protruded out and then snapped off. The blood was lumpy, coagulated and a stink of rot and decay belched from its torso. A horrible gurgling noise came from beneath the hood as more blood was ejected. Slowly, I could see it take a more human shape - its proportions were becoming normalised and the blood which was splattered all over the church started to magically run back towards the creature and be absorbed into its body. After some more minor twitching it lay completely still. I was kneeling no more than a couple of feet away, staring in disbelief at what I had just witnessed when suddenly, it levitated up off the ground, spinning around, righting itself and landing on its feet. It extended its arm towards my head and a horrible ghoulish hand protruded from beneath the sleeve and reached for me. I felt an invisible force act up my body, dragging me towards the bony finger which pointed at my face. I could do nothing to stop it, only try to recoil as its sharp fingernail touched my forehead. It quickly slashed down my face causing blood to gush from a diagonal slice running from my forehead to cheek, just missing my right eye. The creature extended all five fingers and placed its ice cold palm upon my head. An indescribable pain resonated throughout my body and I collapsed onto the floor. Coughing, I spat blood and a familiar series of cracks began to sound. I could feel bones in my legs, chest, back and hips crack and be pulled apart piercing my skin with some even exploding through muscle causing violent spurts of blood to spray around. I tried to scream but could only manage to gargle with the volume of blood in my throat. The pain became more excruciating as I could feel the bones in the right side of my cheek and eye socket fracture and bulge under the skin. My breathing became laboured and I started to convulse. I managed to look over at the creature who stood motionless watching with its hood now pulled down. Those dead eyes fixed directly upon me, piercing my soul. Blood still trickled down its long shaggy hair onto its cold stoney face. My pain

suddenly plateaued and I lay there staring at the ceiling, deformed and mutilated, still struggling to breath. That was when I felt that feeling in my chest again, only this time it slowly started to build in intensity as lights flickered inside my head coupled with a cacophony of sound. It was exactly like being back in the lake. *This is what dying feels like.* I never thought I would welcome death before but I didn't want to experience anymore agony. There was a sudden explosion of light from within me and a deafening noise - the church seemed to warp and melt, as did my tormentor, before everything faded away.

For so long there was only darkness. A darkness so black it was almost like a physical force. There was an ever so faint humming sound from somewhere that was hard to pinpoint. Gradually, it became a bit louder and sounded more like a muffled droning noise, like that of someone leaning upon an organ. As the volume increased so did the pain. It was everywhere. Unbearable pain. Again. The same pain I felt only not so long ago. *Was my torture destined to be resumed?* I coughed some blood and noticed my head was resting against something. I then realised that I seemed to be sitting upright and leaning forward with my face leaning upon an object.

Light seeped through the blackness, trickling into my eyes. It hurt but at least I could see. It took me a few minutes to adjust and to comprehend my surroundings. Like a projector slowly being brought into focus I began to regain my vision. It was dawn and I was sitting in my car, my head against the steering wheel. I now recognised the muffled organlike drone as that of my Mazda's horn. I felt like I was after being hit by a freight train. My head seemed like it weighed a ton but somehow I managed to lift it up and fell back against the headrest, the horn stopped its drone. Shattered glass lay all over the car and I was covered in blood. I must have gotten sick as vomit mixed with blood and froth lay on my lap. My hips and legs appeared to be crushed, my chest was damaged from the airbag and I was trapped by the seat belt, unable to move. A familiar

pain sat in my chest and my breathing was laboured. It only started to dawn on me then that I had been in a crash. Despite my injuries I was overwhelmingly relieved to be alive. I raised a hand to my face to wipe blood away from the large diagonal deep gash on my forehead which thankfully just missed my right eye. I was still very disoriented and it was only after another few minutes that I began to get my bearings properly and looked out the driver's side window. Through the trees I saw an old chapel which sat in front of a large lake. My car was tilted into a shallow stream which ran parallel to the main road and water was pooling around my ankles. I turned my head slowly and for the first time I looked out through the cracked windscreen.

I had only once felt such a similar feeling of absolute terror before. Through the cracked glass, I could see the overgrown ravine surrounded by lush green countryside around the thin stream of water in which my car was stuck. Impaled between the front of my car and a large tree, surrounded by nettles and thorns was a woman. She lay slumped across the bonnet, the outline of a large backpack thrown over her shoulders underneath her dark poncho gave the appearance of a massive hump on her back. Long branches and bits of bark protruded from beneath her clothes and were covered in blood as a result of her being impaled taking on the appearance of horns or spikes. Her twisted broken arms hung by her side and her face was smashed and bloodied. Her neck was broken but her head lay resting on the bonnet, upside-down but facing towards me, lifeless eyes looked directly at mine piercing my soul, as drops of blood continued to trickle down her long shaggy hair onto her cold dead face.