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Revenge is Best Served Cold

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English 12A

Mr. Michael Willett

8 October 2012

Revenge is Best Served Cold

It suddenly became cold, making me shiver. I could see my breath in the air as my heart started to race. All I could focus on was a dark figure under the mercury light by the narrow, dimly lit ally. We were alone. It would be so simple. But can I do it?

I've pictured him thinking this before he attacked me. Maybe he was desperate and needed the money. Maybe he was a malicious man who preyed on loners. Or maybe he was just taking advantage of me being alone. All I knew was that I had about as much luck as a broken mirror.

I had just cashed my miniscule paycheck from Four Season's Floral and was headed to my car, ready to spend my newly made money on gas. It seemed unearthly quiet, making me alert. He then jumped out from behind a dumpster. The stench of rotten eggs, wet dog, and old cheese blasted through my nose. Fumbling with his jacket, he tried to get something out of his pocket. What it was, I didn't know. His movements were wild and unpracticed, but they made me frozen in my tracks nonetheless. I was up against the brick wall of the ally with him blocking my way. The narrowness of the space made the gap between us small. He smelled of dirt and body odor mixed with the smell of the dumpster. It seemed like this was new for him, like he usually didn't do this. Sweat was dripping off of him. I stood there staring at him, making no

effort to leave. It would have been smart to scream, but my brain had stopped working. Once he realized I was trapped, he spoke.

“Give me your money!” He practically spat. The gun he had pulled from his jacket was shaking but his voice was steady. The sound of it shook me out of my frozen state. I quickly took out my wallet, ripped out the cash, tossed it at him, and sprinted to my car. I didn’t hear a gun shot or feet hitting the pavement behind me; but I didn’t slow my pace. I shut the car door, slammed the lock down, and tried to catch my breath. It seemed as if my lungs couldn’t fill up with air fast enough. *So this was what it was like to have a panic attack.* Speeding away, I glanced in the rearview mirror. He had gotten what he wanted and was watching my depleting car.

The darkness of his hair and eyes mixed with his height and muscular build haunted my dreams for weeks after. His face was plastered in my brain, making it easy to describe to the police. I parked outside of the precinct, marched up the steps to the massive wooden doors, and entered the building. After reporting the mugging, I let out the breath I didn’t realize I was holding. I still felt like it wasn’t over, however. My gut was telling me that justice wasn’t served, not yet. It was up to me to get my revenge.

The sun had set and I was off to the ally. I parked my car across the street and crouched behind the dumpster, the smell making bile appear in the back of my throat. I stayed there and waited...waited for *him*. When it felt as if my knees would buckle, I stood to leave. There he was, sulking on the sidewalk. It suddenly became cold, making me shiver. I could see my breath in the air as my heart started to race. The dark figure in front of me did not look harmful, but lonely and confused. I wasn’t fooled. We were alone. It would be so simple. But can I do it?

He was about ten yards away. He started to drag his feet toward me, but I was hidden by the shadows. For the first time, I actually looked at what he was wearing. Jeans with so many holes I was surprised they covered any skin, a ratty jacket that was so stained that I wasn't sure what the actual color was, and shoes barely intact. Don't get me wrong, I did not feel sympathy for this man. But the anger that had been growing inside of me was slowly dwindling. What was I doing here? What can *I* do? I am powerless. Slowly, I walked out of the darkness and onto the sidewalk. As I was passing him, he didn't look up to meet my eyes. The fear of him was gone, replaced by understanding. Calmly, I got back in my car and drove away. By the looks of him, he will mug again. Maybe next time he'll get caught. After all, justice is revenge enough.