

Am I a Man or a Monster?

Rain. Nature's mild depressant. I stared outside, watching the drops pelt the ground. Was I a waste of a person? Just wasted space? Was I as worthless and useless as everyone told me? I felt the tears stream from my red eyes, running down my cheeks. Was I the weed in a field of flowers? And what about my family? Was I the in all their sides?

I wanted to think about something else, anything else but the only other thing that came to my mind was the blood, swirling down the drain. Why had I gone with them? Why hadn't I just gone home? Why was I chosen to play this role? Why God, why?

January 27th, 2015, 12:00p.m.

My black hair hung over my deep blue eyes as I fell asleep in Mr. Duncan's class again, my hands holding my head in a position that deceived any and all. When I slept was when I learned the most. I needed to sleep anyway. I was gonna have a late night hangin' out with friends but what I didn't know was that that night was when my whole life would change and what you don't know can hurt you.

"Luik," someone said, "Luik, wake up! Class is over. What would you like to learn some more after school?" I pulled back my hair and looked up at Mr. Duncan's slightly aged face with tired eyes. I stood up and yawned as I walked out of the classroom, slinging my printed canvas messenger bag onto my shoulder. I dragged my 5'9" body down the hallway and exited the school. I met up with my friends who were waiting for me outside.

12:45

“Hey Luik. Finally wake up?” Nick said. “We’re gonna take a shortcut through the junkyard to Rook’s Diner. You up for it?” Anthony said. “Yeah, you up for it?” Austin said. “Why wouldn’t I be?” I said with a devilish grin but underneath my confidence was my fear screaming reasons why I shouldn’t.

Rumors circled the junkyard. One said that something evil lurked inside its walls and anything it caught within the confines of the junkyard it would devour. Another said that the owner who lived in the junkyard, Mr. Truman, would kill anyone who trespassed on his property. With just those two rumors it already seemed dangerous enough but there was one more rumor that was the worst by far. The last says that any trespassers found by Mr. Truman would become test subjects for his crazy experiments, never to be seen or heard from again. We all saw the dangers of going through the junkyard but we paid them no mind because rumors are just rumors, right?

3:00

We stopped outside old man Truman’s junkyard. My feet ached from hours of walking around town. The junkyard looked so out of place in our town of Gersaldale, a weed in a field of flowers. It would be safer to just walk around it but it took far too long and I could see in all of our faces that no one was willing to go around any way. An involuntary wave of gulps escaped from our small band of friends. We walked to the boxes that always stood up against the fence that surrounded the junkyard.

After we all were over the fence, we checked if Mr. Truman was out and about from our hiding spot behind the junk piles that littered the ground. Satisfied with the results, we began to navigate our way through the junkyard with the junk piles as our cover. However, we reached an

area that had a large open gap between piles right in front of Truman's shack. Checking to make sure Truman wasn't outside again, we quickly ran across the gap one by one. Except me. I got halfway across the gap and tripped on a rock. I stood up and dusted myself off when suddenly I heard something that sounded like a tuft of feathers being shot out of a pipe. "What are you doing, Luik? Why are you just standing there? Get over here before Truman sees you." Nick loudly whispered. I ran over to them, not noticing the small dart that fell from my neck.

3:30

We hopped from the fence and dropped onto Vinyl Avenue. "Oh, hello boys." Ms. Crabtree said as she walked past, going to bingo as always. "Hi Ms. Crabtree." We all said simultaneously as we crossed the street to Rook's Diner. I pushed open the door and smelled the wonderful scents of burgers being cooked, of pies being baked and of milkshakes being shaken. "Back again today, guys? Will it be the usual?" Rook said as we sat in our favorite spot.

5:00

"Like hell I'm gonna map out Europe on my own time." Nick said. "Yeah, I'll just do it first period." Austin said. "Hey Luik, you feelin' alright? You're looking a little bit sick." Anthony said. I looked down at my burger. I had barely eaten it and my forehead was drenched in sweat. "Yeah, I'm fine; I just need some fresh air. That's all." I said as I stood up to leave. I walked out of the diner to the alleyway next to it.

I took a deep breath but it didn't seem to help, in fact, it got worse. I doubled over in pain. It felt like my internal organs were moving inside my body. My whole body began to tingle.

Was I going crazy?

White fur began growing out of my neck and expanded over my whole body. I was suddenly becoming skinnier but more muscular. My muscles felt as if they were being compounded, like carbon becoming diamond, thinning out yet still getting stronger. My face pushed outward into what could only be described as a balance between a shark's face and a fox's face. Rising to the top of my head, my ears became pointed and heightened. I felt another joint grow from my legs and I was forced into standing in a digitigrade position on two legs.

Was any of this real?

Soft pads grew out of my hands and feet. I could suddenly see perfectly. I stared as long claws grew from my fingernails. As they grew my mind faltered and drifted away.

It was replaced by bloodlust. I felt like I was watching a movie as my body effortlessly dashed out of the alleyway into the street.

Had I gone mad?

Was this all a dream?

It all felt so real and yet so insane.

My body ran to something but body was so far away that I didn't notice. A scream rang out in the silent air of Gersaldale. I felt my limbs moving but I wasn't the one moving them. My body slashed as my mind began to regain control. I was able to hold back the last slash but it was too late.

I stood over Ms. Crabtree's limp and lifeless body.

It was mangled to the point of unrecognizable.

Had I done this?

I ran.

I ran home.

I ran to the bathroom and looked at myself in the mirror. I had reverted back to being human but the blood wasn't gone. I took off my clothes. It was a shame that I would have to burn my favorite shirt but I could never bring my self to wear it again, anyway. I stepped into the shower and turned on the water, hoping that it could wash away my worries and guilt. However, it made it worse as I watched Ms. Crabtree's blood run down the drain. I quickly got out of the shower and dried myself off, wrapping my waist in the towel. I looked at myself in the mirror but I didn't see myself in the mirror all I saw was a killer with the eyes of a monster.

How could I live with myself?

I couldn't.

9:00a.m. January 28th

I stared outside watching the drops of rain pelt the ground.

Was I a waste of a person? Just wasted space?

I couldn't even stop myself.

Why was I chosen to play this role?

Why god why?

NO!

I wouldn't play that role.

I wasn't useless.

I stood up and walked out of my room.

I wouldn't just be a pawn in this chess game called life.

12:07p.m.

Out of breath and panting furiously, I entered the small facility and checked myself in. They took me to a white room and even gave me a white jacket. They sat me in the room. The floor and walls looked and felt so soft, covered in giant pillows. I finally was calm and at peace.

Would anyone notice I was gone?

Would they remember me?

Would they come looking for me?

Was I all alone in the world?