

## Come With Me

By: Jaidyn Carlile

Windchimes sang their mellow tune at the summer wind howled. The old woman sat upon her back patio. The radio inside the house clicked on by itself as it created a symphony with the wind on vocals. Nadine began to hum along. The music playing on her radio was familiar in a sense but sounded off as if the song was lost in time.

The chair across from her scraped across the floor as the man sat down his face distorted and unrecognizable. “Hello darling,” he said. His words oozed like thick honey and if she were a bug she was bound to be stuck. He looked as if he had walked out the same era as the song.

“How are you this evening, my love?” she asked. She took a sip from her coffee; they had often done this in their youth

The man shrugged. “I’m lonely. I think it’s time you came with me Nadine.” Reaching across the table he placed an ice-cold hand on top of hers.

Nadine flinched at the touch. At one time her husband’s gentle touch would have soothed her, but now it is nothing but a kiss of death. “I’m not ready... the children—”

He gripped tightly onto her hand. “The children are grown. You don’t remember who they are most days.” He brings his other hand under her chin forcing her to look at him. “Look at me Darling. You can’t even remember my face.”

“Stop.” Nadine pushed him away. Her jaw clenched as she began to shake. Why can’t she remember their names? His name? His face?

The man remained calm as he leaned back in his chair crossing his arms over his chest. “You’re clinging to fragments of memories, Nadine. I think it’s time you join me.” He stared her down although his face has no distinguishable features. “Let them remember you while you still have some of your mind. Don’t wait until you don’t have enough pieces to put together a memory.”

Nadine shook her head. “No, I’m not ready.” She stood up and made a beeline for the back door, but the man blocked her path. She turned to look over her shoulder swearing he was behind her just a moment ago.

“God dammit, stubborn woman! Nadine don’t fight it,” he says. He grabbed her shoulders with a painfully tight grip. “I have been visiting you almost every day for months. You keep getting worse.”

“Months... no.” Tears began to roll down Nadine’s face. “I would remember that,” Nadine said. She tried to push the man away, but his grip was too firm.

“Nadine, you don’t even remember my name!” said the man.

Nadine scoffed at him. “Death. Your name is death!”

The man let go of her and shook his head.

A rather violent gust of wind came along turning the gentle chimes into an ear shattering bunch of noise. The man speaks, but the words are drowned out by the noise. Nadine covered her ears in a futile effort to block out the noise.

His oozing mumbled voice becomes screams as his face melts down to the floor, and the radio turns to a horrid concoction of rushed out of tune noise that harmonized with the melted man’s screams of agony. The violent percussion of chimes and ravenous howls from the wind added on to the symphony seemingly made by the devil himself.

Her vision faded to black as she collapsed onto the cold ground. Then finally the silence followed.

The man picked her up bridal style his face now that of a charming middle-aged man, and the peaceful woman in his arms seemed to be thirty years younger. Behind him stands the cloaked figure known only as death.