

Watchful Eye

Lights flashed bright, and I lost complete focus on my surroundings. The ringing police sirens in my ears became present. I could hear and feel my heart pounding in my chest — it hurt so much. Fear was creeping up behind me, swiftly and slowly. I remember looking everywhere around me for answers, but I found none. However, the blue in the sky quickly turned gray, matching the scene that stood beneath it. Red, blue, red, and blue stained my memories of that night heavily. My hands sat high as my breath was being stolen from me by the tension in the air.

“What’s wrong?” he said swiftly. “What did we do?” he questioned abruptly. “We didn’t do anything!” he yelled, frustration spilling from his voice as he tried to get some type of reaction from the cops that had stopped us in our tracks.

No answers were given. We switched gazes between each other and the men standing in front of us as we watched them draw their guns and point them directly at us. My throat closed completely, and my body became paralyzed. I didn’t take another glance at him, fearing that any move would mean the end of my life. I stared directly at the officers, switching between their gazes to predict their moves.

They didn’t move from their stances. They weren’t listening to him, and they didn’t care who we were — we just fit the description.

Out of frustration and without answers, he dropped his hands and turned his back to the officers. I broke eye contact and watched him take his first step. At that moment, my heart sank and my feet felt like weights. I couldn’t move. I just watched as he took his first step into his grave.

I can’t say he didn’t know, but more like he hoped they did — like in a game of truth or dare, he dared them to make their move.

The sound barrier guarding my ears was shattered by the first shot. The blinds guarding my eyes dropped with the second shot, and the third cured my paralysis. Twelve shots were what it took for them to feel satisfied with a job “well done.”

He fell to the floor, stunned by the pain coursing through his back. I ran over to him and held his head in my lap. The silence of that day was unmatched. I looked around quickly, trying to gather every ounce of thought and emotion I could, but nothing came.

I saw their faces once more and saw nothing. They had no emotion, no remorse — nothing, as if this wasn’t the first time. I forgot at that moment, but it wasn’t the first time, and it was sadly not the last.

He gasped for air slowly and softly in my arms. I looked at him, desperately fighting to live, and no one was reacting — not even me.

Harsh courage slapped me in the mouth as the only word that came to mind slipped out softly.

“Ambulance.”

That word was the key to unlocking everything. My chest became tight, and my eyes burned like lava. Tears began to fall quickly, hitting my cheeks roughly.

“Please, call an ambulance,” I cried out loudly.

They didn’t move, and they never said anything.

The pain in my chest was fueled by every emotion, but it was lit on fire by pure anger as the officers’ radios spoke in unison.

“We’ve found the guy we were looking for.”

My face fell blank as we all heard those words. They looked at each other and then back at me.

“Sorry for disturbing you guys. Have a nice night,” he said with a smile as he walked away to get into his car.

I snapped back to reality as my cousin shook my shoulder and waved his hand in my face to get my attention.

“Are you okay?” he asked, worried. “You look like you’ve seen a ghost.” He laughed with a bright smile.

“I’m fine,” I said back with a soft, nervous laugh as we continued to walk home.