

*The bus unloads and three get off. One boy with baggy jeans crosses the road and moves with speed down a shaded, long road. A man follows in a shining black car. He had been waiting on the side of the street for some time. Waiting for this innocent young man to begin his walk home. The boy could be no older than twenty, with brown hair and a strong face.. The man wants him gone. Wants him gone bad. The car follows slowly at first, and then stops beside the boy...*

*Sean Breton had always been a psychic. He had often been encouraged to become a criminal profiler. He sometimes received spontaneous visions of crimes being committed. So he had followed his newfound dream of being a profiler upon ending his career as a forensic scientist. He had been able, during his career, to "become" a maniac, to view the world through the eyes of a psychopath. His job had taught him many things. He had left with a new look on life. The gruesome deaths of men and women he had worked on did disturb him, but the whole experience did not leave him suicidal or change him into a forever-grumpy man. Rather, it showed him there was so much more to humankind than what people saw.*

*The boy is uncertain about the man as he peered into the car. Oh God, does this man need him gone. Powerful arms wrap the boy into a hug, around the car's front bumper, kicking, scratching, and the man throws the boy inside...*

*Sean pushed the images from his mind and smiled to himself, driving down the street in his black Porsche. He had recently won the lottery, and had taken early retirement. His girlfriend, Gina, sat beside him in the passenger seat, busily adjusting the radio channel. He was always patient with her, even when she annoyed the hell out of him.*

*When he felt like throwing his fist through the radio, he said, "This is the life, isn't it?" He looked out over the mountainside, twisty roads stretching along for miles and miles. Sean looked at the endless ocean below the cliff, smiling once more.*

*"It really is beautiful. But the drive isn't part of the holiday," Gina's expression twisted into irritation as she met his eyes. "Is it?"*

Sean sighed. "No, not if you don't want it to be. It is for me." He smiled. "I love to drive."

"Glad you do," Gina said and started fiddling with the radio dial again. Sean counted down from ten, letting his anger slowly release.

The farmhouse where the man parks the car. The boy is drugged and sleeping. The man brings him inside, shaking he staggers under the weight of the boy. What is he doing? No it's got to be done.

Sean caught himself frowning. Many people had explained to him that the criminal mind would eventually go away when he stopped using it. Unfortunately, he could not rid himself of the burden. Horrible killings still filled and cluttered his vast mind.

Reaching the coastline, he pulled over and referred to the map. The boat station was only over the hill and a mile to the right. He traced his finger on the narrow black line that dead-ended along the coast, and tapped it twice. He folded the map and tossed it on Gina's lap. She sighed and violently shoved it in the glove compartment. Sean didn't notice her anger.

He drove on...

All the man's lingering sense of doubt about his actions goes away as the boy wakes up. Tossing his head back and forth, back and forth, the boy wards off his demons but is unable to strike. His eyes open and he cries out, sits up, sees the man.

"Oh my God! W-Who are you?" the boy wants to know. He studies the man. The man seems very fit. So does the boy. The man lurches forward. His original intention is just to teach the boy a lesson. . The man must now become violent in order to get his way. "Why?" kick, kick, punch, bite..

He looked at his wife, almost went off the road, and then once more maintained good steering. He felt her eyes on him, but he ignored it for the most part. He glanced over a few times but her eyes were glued to the road, and she was

unknowingly humming the country tune on the radio. Sean hated country music.

*The boy is dead. The man —now a killer—cannot understand how the boy died. Maybe of fright. Maybe the beating. Maybe he would come back to life very soon. The killer's mind races as he thinks of a plan. He needs a plan.*

Sean was straining now to keep the thoughts away. The male voice of country music droned irritatingly like a broken banjo, making Sean's head throb.

*The killer's head throbs. He stands motionless. His mind blank. somewhere to store the body? Where can he put it? He attempts to check the time, becoming nervous, but his gold watch is gone! Where is it? His Girlfriend had given it to him two years ago and was sure to tell him she paid a lot of money for it. She would be furious that he lost it! It's just disappeared off his wrist! Where could it be?*

Sean saw the boat station. He neared it, pulled over, and got out of the Porsche. A jetty with brown and black seaweed clinging in bundles to the sides stood ahead. A boathouse with broken grimy windows and strips of old white paint on the rotting boards was on the right of the car. On the left at the end of the jetty opposite the boathouse was a small but sturdy blue vessel, bobbing on the incoming tide with the words: "Gayle's Dream" printed on the bow. Sean got out. he heard the window of his Porsche roll down and his girlfriend yell out: "Why are we stopped here?"

Sean turned around and held up his index finger. "It won't take a minute, dear." He approached the boathouse and looked inside the open door. The smell of mouldy fish burned his nose. Within was a man wearing a white, stained shirt, ripped jeans, a bald head and scruffy grey beard. He sat at a table. The man looked up from the deck of cards laid on the table. One of his eyeballs was long missing, and Sean, ever amused by other's misfortunes, nearly burst out laughing at the empty socket, covered with a thin layer of indented skin. The other eye, grey and cloudy, studied Sean intensely.

"You Mr. Joe Perkins?" the man asked.

"I am," Sean lied.

"I'm just leavin' here."

"Good. I'll get the suitcase."

Homer went back to the Porsche, disregarding Gina's questions, and opened the trunk. On top of Sean and Gina's luggage was a very large, black suitcase. A dark burgundy stain covered several inches of its surface. He pulled it out of the trunk, leaning to one side struggling with the weight. He crossed the bonnet of the car, he smiled at his passenger, and once more approached the man and handed the suitcase to the man as the man boarded the sea vessel, making sounds about how heavy it was.

"Now you won't be looking in that?" Sean asked.

"Nope."

Sean smiled and retrieved a wad of hundred dollar bills from his pocket. Although he had little trust in anyone, he was not particularly worried about this man for some reason. He handed the money to the fisherman.

"Sides," said the fisherman, untying a complex knot keeping the boat to a grey and rotting post. "I can't remember much these days. I bet Joe Parkin's ain't your real name anyways." Homer was no longer interested in further transactions. He had already turned and was walking away as the man spoke.

Upstairs he finds it. A suitcase. It is large and musty and dusty and the killer finds it appalling, but proper for an appalling task. He goes back downstairs and collects the boy into the suitcase, leaving a bloody mess behind him. A tight squeeze to fit it in there but it works. He leaves with the suitcase and drives home, listening to Beethoven, worrying about his watch but letting the memories of what just happened ease...ease...ease...and they drift away almost completely.

Almost...

Back in the Porsche Gina glared at Sean. "What the hell was that about?" she

wanted to know.

“Keep your nose out of my business,” Sean said, and turned the key in the ignition. Sean’s business was finally taken care of. Perhaps now, he could enjoy the holiday to its full extent.

Back on the main road, Gina said, “Hmm,” and she tapped something on the dashboard. “It appears that this clock isn’t working.”

Sean looked down and saw that in fact the digital display clock on the dash read 1:06am, which made no sense whatsoever as it could be no later than three o’ clock in the afternoon, and the sun was still shining high in the sky.

“I’ll set it,” Gina said, leaning forward with her finger poised before the buttons corresponding with the minutes and hours. “What time is it?”

Sean kept driving. He steeled himself for his wife’s fury and did not look at her when he said, “I don’t know. I’ve lost my watch.”