

The Man in Black

By Luca Ficarra

Alone and cold, I look at my leather watch on my wrist. I can just make out in the dim light what it says-it says midnight. I look around and I see rows of lockers. I realise where I am. I'm at St Martin's-my high school. How did I even get here? I'm stuffed into a year eight's old dusty locker that smells like rotten fruits and is full of loose papers. I hear something. What is that? It's coming from the end of the hallway just at the entrance of the school, it is getting closer and closer. From the gap in the locker, I see a figure with brown hair and gleaming blue eyes wearing a grey hoodie. I recognise the figure from somewhere; I'm just not sure where. It walks past the locker. It looks like its holding something. A strange liquid drips off the item the figure holds. Could it be water? Blood? The figure stops and slowly turns around and runs off into the other end of the hallway and a door slams shut. I can't hear anything else so I quietly slither out of the locker like a snake and make my way to the end the hallway the other end where the figure had come from.

I quickly make my way out of the front entrance and take a deep breath of fresh air closing the door quietly behind me. I hear the cries of the crickets hiding in the grass and look up at the stars covering the night sky like a veil. I quietly make my way out of the school grounds trying not to make a noise. BANG! A window smashes than another then another. AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAGHH!

I run out of the schoolyard as fast as my feet can carry me; my heart pounding like thunder. I run frantically all the way to the street of my house as I live fairly close to school. I turn my head back and forth to see if there is anyone behind me. I vault over my wooden fence and jump into my bedroom. I lock the window and the back and front door and run into bed scared out of my skin and try to get some rest. I think in my head: who was the man? Why was he there and who was screaming? How did I even get there?

I lie awake the whole night. I can't even get a minute of sleep. I get up and walk to the police station to tell the police all about the horrors of the night. My best friend Mark comes with me. As I make my way from my house to the station, I hear a rustle in the bushes. A man dressed in black clothing comes from behind and smashes both our heads with a Yankee branded wooden baseball bat.

I wake up in a grey dull basement with my arms tightly tied behind a chair. My face is aching, and there's blood on my clothes. Mark is next to me with tape over his mouth; unable to talk. I scan the dingy room and see a furnace on the left wall. Who knows what it's been used for? "URGHH UGH!" I hear the sound of a man walking down the stairs. When he appears in the doorway I am drawn to his piercing blue eyes. It was the man from school, I was sure of it!

As he walks up to us I realise my old leather watch is gone. The man rips off the tape from our mouths.

"How did you get this watch?" Questions the man.

“Who are you? What do you want?” I blurt.

“Answer me!” He demands. His voice is strong but dull.

“I got it from my grandfather; I’m not sure how he got it. Why do you want it anyway?” I begin to wonder how my grandfather got the watch.

“Doesn’t matter anyway this is my watch now!” The man slowly walks towards us and pulls out a sharp knife.

I rock my chair back and forth with great power; crashing onto the floor and the chair breaking. I scamper over to Mark’s chair and the man charges at me. I grab hold of the chair Mark is in and smash the man in the face with it. “Whoa” said Mark with fright. The man gets ready to stab me. I lift the chair up and it hits the bottom. I push forward with the chair, bulldoze his body, and undo the knot while the man is down on the cold concrete ground. Mark gets up and we double-team him. I throw a wallop at his face knocking him down instantly. “ARRGH”.

Mark calls the police and we run for the exit. As we are running, I notice a painting in the hall. The man in the painting had a light hairy arm and on it was a leather watch with gold casing; identical to my watch. I study the picture. I suddenly realise that he wasn’t really after me, but the watch. What was so special about the watch that he was willing to kill a stranger for it?