

[REDACTED]

McGough

English Period 1

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Gone

I wake up. Everything seems oddly quiet. My baby brother isn't screaming and banging his toys like he usually is. I don't hear my mom making breakfast or my dad watching the news. I don't even hear my older sister talking on her phone to her friends. I slowly creep out of bed and go into the bathroom. It isn't a mess with all my sister's makeup everywhere. Is she sick? Maybe she's just still sleeping. I walk down the hall to her bedroom door and I'm surprised that it's open a crack. She always makes a big deal about her "needing privacy" and always keeps it closed and locked. I slowly push it open, trying not to make a sound. If she is in there she'll kill me. But I open it all the way and she's not in there. Her bed is perfectly made and everything's put away, almost like she never slept there last night. Maybe she had a sleepover with one of her friends and I just don't remember.

I walk back down the hall and down the stairs to the kitchen expecting to see my parents. I don't. The room doesn't smell like French toast and bacon like it always does on Saturdays. It is Saturday right? Did I sleep in and miss the bus and everyone forgot about me and left? I run back up to my room and look at the clock on my nightstand. Saturday, November 10, 9:15 it

says. I run back downstairs and open the door to the garage to see if my parent's cars are there. Nope. Not there. I run to the front window. My hearts beating faster now. Very fast. Where could everyone be? Did they all leave me? I look out the window to see that my sister's car is gone too. My pulse is racing, my hearts beating, my head is pounding. Where in the world is everyone? I yell as loud as I can,

"MOM! DAD! SARAH!" No response. I can only hear my own words echoing through the empty house. I sprint to the door my heart racing faster than it ever has before. I open the front door and look around. No ones car is in their driveway. No lights are on. None of the snowy streets have been plowed and no one has shoveled their driveways or pathways.

I run down the street to my best friend Olivia's house. I run up the snowy steps, my feet soaked and freezing in my slippers, and bang on her door as long and hard as I can. I ring the doorbell over and over and over again. Not even a hint of anyone in the house. I look through the windows and see everything empty and quiet, just like my house. I spin around, breathing very fast short breaths, barely long enough to see my breath in the cold air. What was going on? Why is there no one in my town? I sprint back to my house and throw open the door. I rush to the house phone in my dad's office. I quickly dial my mom's phone number.

Ring.

Ring.

Ring.

No answers, and it goes to voicemail. It's comforting to hear my mom's voice, even if it is just a recording.

"Hi mom" I choke up and can't hold it in. I start crying. "Mom where are you guys? Where did everyone go?" The time amount is up and the voicemail ends. I take a deep breath and try to calm my pulse and my crying. I dial my dad's number and wearily put the phone up to my ear.

Ring.

Ring.

Rin-

"Hello?" It's my dad's voice! I scream and start to cry, but with tears of joy this time.

"Daddy! It's me Courtney! Dad, where are you? Where is everyone?" I feel like I'm going to throw up my hearts beating so fast. Tears are running down my face.

"Courtney, um Courtney who?" My dad answers confused. My heart stops. What does he mean?

"Um dad, it's your daughter...Courtney..."

"I'm sorry, but I don't recall ever having a daughter. In fact I don't remember anything..." The line goes dead.

I can't move. I slowly put the phone down, and then I break down. I can't stop crying, I lay on the ground crying until I slowly cry myself to sleep.

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I wake up what feels like a few hours later. I'm still on the floor of my dad's office with the phone in my hand, but as I slowly come back to my senses I start to realize the smell of french toast coming from the kitchen. I realize the sound of my baby brother crying and I hear my sister talking on the phone to her friends. I slowly stand up and walk into the kitchen to see my mom standing by the stove frying bacon. I run to her and hug her as hard as I can.

"Well good morning to you too sweetie." she says giving me a kiss on the head. I start to cry again, happy to have everyone back.

"Honey, what's wrong?" my mom says wiping my tears away.

"Where were all you guys this morning?" I ask sniffing.

"Well I don't quite know what you mean Court, we've been here all night and morning." What? Then I realize it must have all been a dream!

"It was all a dream!" I yell. I run up to Sarah's room and don't even worry about her yelling at me.

"It was all a dream!" I yell at her. I run to my dad and my brother and yell the same thing. I go into my room and fall on my bed. I take a huge sigh. I get up and go to the mirror to brush my hair. Then I notice I'm wearing the same clothes I was wearing in my dream, my eyes are all puffy like I had been crying a lot, I turn around and look at my bed. It's perfectly made and my stuffed animals are all perfectly placed like how I put them yesterday



morning. And... What was I doing lying on the office floor with the phone in my hand...?