



Death. Death was everywhere. She could not explain it, she just *felt* it. She felt danger, but she did not stop walking in the long dark corridor. She could not hear anything except for her fast breath and heartbeats. She started running faster and faster until her feet could not follow this furious rhythm anymore. She stumbled, and as she was trying to get back on her feet, she saw a bloody figure hanging by a chain.

Alex woke up screaming. It was just a nightmare, she tried to reassure herself. She took a look at her room mate who was still sleeping. The young girl got up, went to her dormitory's bathroom and drunk a glass of water. As she felt she could not sleep anymore, she took a shower and wanted to do her homework for the next day. Computers were forbidden in the Norwich boarding school – which looked more like a castle than a school - and there was not television either. As she went to the school library to study, she saw a figure standing alone in the corridor. Who could be awake in the middle of the night ? Probably somebody who had terrifying nightmares, just like her. She kept walking until she saw the boy standing. She had never seen him before, which was pretty strange because Alex knew everybody in the school. When she met the boy's eyes, she looked down and speeded up. When she turned back, the strange boy was still staring at her. She looked away and held her breath until the library.

Why ? Why did he look at her like that ? Why didn't he say hello ? Why didn't *she* say hello ? Alex was not a shy girl, usually. Moreover, there was nothing scary about this boy, except the fact he was standing in a corridor in the middle of the night. She sat on a chair, trying to recompose her mind, and worked a few hours before her first class started.

At 8 a.m, Alex was in the English litterature class waiting for the teacher with her class mates. Ms Greystone arrived a little late, and she was not alone. The strange boy was with her. When Alex saw him, her heart stopped beating. Their eyes met again and the young girl looked down hoping he would not recognize her. Ms Greystone introduced him : "This is Mike, your new class mate. He comes from London, I hope you will be kind with him." Mike went and sat at the back of the room, so Alex could not see him. Ms Greystone had no time to start the class before the director himself entered the room. He said something to the teacher who looked shocked, and left as he had come.

"Children, listen, I have something important to tell you." Ms Greystone said. "Jessica Malloy has been found dead in her room this morning."

Her voice trembled when she pronounced the last words. Most students were shocked, some of them started crying. Alex turned and looked at Mike. He was watching her with a blank expression on his face.

The day was coming to an end and nobody really knew what had happened to Jessica Malloy. But the rumour had it that she had committed suicide. Alex could not believe it. Jessica was a joyful girl, never in a bad mood, she had no reason to kill herself. Alex decided to go in Jessica's dormitory to see it with her own eyes.

The door was half open, and the room seemed to be completely dark. She entered, closed the door behind her and tried to find the switch. As she could not find it, she groped in the dark doing her best not to stumble. A smell of decay was drifting in the air. Alex butted against something tall and warm. She turned back, tried to run and fell down. The



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floor was covered with a sticky substance. Alex got back on her feet and got out of the room as fast as she could.

Alex woke up screaming. This horrible nightmare again... But had she dreamed about Jessica's death or was it reality ? She had to be sure. She got up and went back to Jessica's dormitory. But before she could reach the room, Alex met Mike in the corridor. He was standing alone, just like the first time she saw him. Alex stopped. They kept watching each other for a long minute until the boy turned back and started moving. After hesitating a second, Alex decided to follow him. However he was too fast ; he managed to leave her behind in a few minutes. The young girl found herself alone in a dark corridor in the middle of the night.

A few hours later, the students learned about Andrew Jefferson's suicide. The director went to the classroom and announced it himself. Students were shocked, exactly like the last time. Alex seemed to be the only one thinking that there was something wrong.

It was 2 a.m and Alex could not sleep. She wanted to get up, but she was certain that she would meet Mike in the corridor. Anyway, this boy intrigued her so much ! She got up and went out of her dormitory. As she was walking in the corridor, Alex wondered if it was a good idea. She started worrying when she felt a warm breath on her neck. She was sure it was him.

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Student:

Ilanah DUBOIS (16 years old)
Cours Bastide (Marseille)
1°L

Teacher:

Ms Mathilde SERHAN
Cours Bastide (Marseille)
