

IMPLIED MALICE

Your eyes widen as the mental cloud starts to dissipate and you try to figure out where you are. You have a diamond-splinter headache. Your arm feels like a ton of lead. You are covered in blood.

You reach out to try to check yourself with your dominate left hand – a recessive trait that Sister Mary Evelyn had tried to beat out of you. Literally. You slowly pat yourself in an attempt to figure out where all this blood is coming from. No luck.

Your left hand drops back down beside you as you stare wide-eyed, not focusing on anything. Your eyes are completely unfocused and even through the cloudiness you think back to that one time when you tried to deliberately unfocus your eyes so that you could see the hidden picture emerge from a collect of random dots. You had the hardest time doing it, but Ana had no problem.

Ana.

You go to lift your right arm – the one that feels as if it is about to burst – to check the other side of your body but it doesn't want to move. You tug repeatedly but it simply won't move.

What the hell is that noise?

As the beeping continues, the room starts to come into focus. Sterile walls painted a neutral color come into view. They are painted with semi-gloss, the kind of paint used bathrooms so that they will hold up to the moisture.

The dominant feature in this weird non-bathroom appears to be a medium-sized big box TV that is bolted near the ceiling above you and is angled down so that you can see it from the bed.

A bed. You are in a bed.

But what the hell is all that beeping?

Your eyes start to re-focus, as if trying to snap back to reality after starting too long *through* the hidden picture. You let your head flop to the side and come nose-to-nose with a large monitor. The source of the beeping.

You are in a hospital.

That would explain the semi-gloss. Apparently easier to disinfect and wash away any stray blood.

The blood. Why are you covered in blood? And why are you still wearing your favorite jeans and an old t-shirt?

The fog starts to lift a little more and you roll your head back to center. You reach up to try to scratch the side of your head but your damn right hand still won't move.

This accident – whatever it was – must have been pretty damn bad to immobilize your arm.

Your arm!

You momentarily panic at the thought that the reason you can't move your right arm is that you have no right arm to move. That whatever accident brought you here also took it from you. You reach over with lefty and quickly attempt to check. Your left hand comes to rest on your right forearm slightly below the elbow.

Thank God!

Your head is still killing you but other than that and your dead still-present arm, you seem like you. An extremely confused you, but still you nevertheless.

You try to think back to your last memories, but they are all still a blur.

The last thing you remember is that you had been drinking. Day drinking, actually. It was the middle of the afternoon on a Tuesday. You remember it was a Tuesday because you were having a conversation about the Monday Night Football game the night before. It was one of the last things you remember.

But why the hell were you drinking on some random Tuesday and not at work?

You wish you could remember and you try to wipe your curls out of your face with righty. Still no luck.

You look down and finally figure out why.

Handcuffs.

You are handcuffed to the rail of your hospital bed.

What the hell happened?