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Warnings We Do Not Heed

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Author's Note: While watching a BBC documentary about a remote lighthouse off the coast of England, I was fascinated by the owner's admission he couldn't get anyone to live on site as a lighthouse keeper despite offering one million pounds for anyone willing to stay the entire year. Just one year, which seemed doable in my book. Why couldn't anyone last the year? Sure, the lighthouse was situated on a small rock island less than a mile off the English coastline -- accessible only by boat with no neighbors and no way on or off the little island except by charter. But the lighthouse itself was fully equipped with a solar generator, backup generator, satellite connectivity, a keeper's apartment, library and full kitchen and so on. All the modern conveniences. Despite this, and the million pound offer, no one had either the nerve or courage to stay the entire year. The place apparently being too remote, with too extreme of weather, and too much isolation. Which gave me an idea.

Lighthouse On the Other Side

Sarah Tilly, 22 years old and a recent college graduate, was the last sorority sister anyone thought would become a lighthouse keeper. A journalist sure. She wrote for the Charter Gazette and the Omega Nu newsletter her whole four years at Kreske College. A wife, possibly, even if she had recently broken up with her college boyfriend for reasons yet to be divulged. Maybe even a mother, as many of her sisterhood envisioned themselves becoming in their post-collegiate careers. But not a lighthouse keeper.

Sarah didn't think it unlikely. More like an unexpected opportunity seized, hoping it would rescue her from past transgressions. Or so she hoped. Until she found herself standing on the seventh floor inside Pigeon Point Lighthouse having serious doubts.

Because the minute she'd walked into the lighthouse keeper's apartment and flicked on the lights, a "spooky as shit" *thump-bump-bumping* started sounding behind the wall. Like something solid whacking something soft. Like metal on wood. Which was unnerving and made her immediately want to quit and go home.

Oh hell NO! Sarah thought, if that's some crazy serial killer banging away on the other side of the wall then I'm outta here! I'm not going to end up like one of those lame-ass girls in those stupid slasher flicks Brad always watched – running around in my nightgown fending off some maniacal intruder for 90 minutes. You can take that little Jamie Lee Curtis, scream queen trope and shelve it where the sun don't shine!

The owner of the lighthouse knew this was a possibility -- the natural settling noises of sea swelling over rock, dashing against the walls of the land-locked lighthouse -- which made for some interesting acoustics within and tended to excite the imagination of new employees not used to its rhythms. So he made sure to prepare Sarah during their three hour drive out. "It might take you a bit to get used to the old girl's sounds," the owner explained. "She does tend to shift and settle in her bones. Especially during high tides. Which can surprise newcomers. But don't worry, despite all the oddity of sounds, she's as solid as a rock, tight as a duck's tail, and fairly easy to get along with. Just listen closely and you'll learn her language soon enough. All those noises will become second nature. Like a secret language shared just between the two of you."

Sarah trusted the owner and took his comments at face value. But now in the quiet all by her lonesome, standing in the official caretaker's apartment, she felt unsure. And a little unprepared. And a little unnerved. She'd yet to play out the deeper quality of remote this place truly was. Or how such acute isolation would affect her over the entire year she was employed to watch over Pigeon Point.

For all my introverted tendencies, Sarah thought, have I ever been this alone before? Or this far from everyone and everything I know? Without Mom or Dad or Lizbeth or Richard within a single call's reach? Wow! Now there's a reality check!

Pigeon Point, all of a sudden, wasn't feeling like the cozily romantic notion she'd conjured up months earlier when she applied for the position. Believing the job would grant her ample time and solitude to complete her first novel. Many great authors had done so – Steinbeck, Thoreau, Austen, and Proulx – all to celebrated effect. And Sarah figured if she, like they, could put away the distractions of the modern world long enough – like boyfriends and relationships and money and jobs -- and step out of her comfort zone, then she too could achieve similar results.

"I'll just embrace the seclusion," she brightly told friends and family, "and let my inner voice speak out loud and clear. Pigeon Point will be a wonderful place for that. Very cathartic!" *Not to mention a super quiet place for a heartbroken girl to get over all the pain and disillusionment recently suffered.*

The actual Pigeon Point was more cloistered -- a decommissioned lighthouse erected centuries earlier in stone and iron and mortar. Built to guide seafaring ships back home from the vast coldness of the deep ocean, but now, in modern times, retrofitted into a remote satellite station with high definition, bicameral radar array dishes mounted into the pinnacle so the ZEMCO Corporation could communicate with their orbiting satellites high above. And, as some conspiracy-minded people opined, even to the alien stars beyond. But there were no neighbors surrounding its rocky shores, and the location itself on federally protected land, with a vast Pacific ocean tracing another twenty-three hundred miles up the coast all the way to the wilds of Alaska. So few, if any, knew exactly what Pigeon Point was used for. It was that remote a place.

Deciding to stay, Sarah picked up her typewriter and suitcase, and walked them into the back room. *There may be creepy strange noises coming from next door without explanation, but that doesn't mean I have to give in to my fears. Not to mention, I haven't eaten since yesterday and I'm famished! So first things first.*

Which is what the owner instructed Sarah to do.

"Doncha do anything on an empty stomach," the owner advised. "There's little reason to rush up there except under a few circumstances. And hunger ain't one. In fact, hunger tends to cloud the mind and make a person skittish. If you're skittish then you'll make mistakes. Mistakes cause problems. And problems get people hurt. You don't want to be hurt so far from help! So please don't rush! Eat a solid meal, get plenty of rest, and take your time before you do anything. Okay little missy?"

Coffee then, Sarah instructed herself. Coffee first. And toast. With bacon and some of those avocados I brought along, if they're ripe enough. And turn on the news. Plug in the radio and let the sound liven up the place a bit. After that, when I'm calm and ready, I'll go check out that noise. See if there's anything to report. The owner said he'd be back on Friday to re-stock, so I can let him know then if I want to stay longer or not.

Sarah unpacked her food supplies and set to work -- making as much noise as she could so the sounds filling the room reminded her of being home. The coffee was espresso blend -- hot and bitter strong. The toast, sourdough with Irish butter. The bacon crispy burnt. With avocado nearly ripe, but still so good. The news coming from the radio typical morning fare -- music, advertisements, dull host banter. Not very interesting, but comforting. Until the end of the hour when the local news jumped in to report a huge storm heading her way.

"Breaking News, folks!" *Sally Surrell the Weather Girl* purred over the airwaves, "Looks like our friends over at the National Oceanic Service and the Meteorological Weather

Tracking Agency are forecasting a high-pressure system cycling down from Kimmo Bay that's gonna make landfall earlier than expected. We're talking strong winds and upwards of sixteen inches of heavy rain pouring down over our heads, folks. So batten down the hatches. Looks like we're in for our first class four winter storm."

"Oh great!" Sarah moaned, "I haven't even inspected the grounds yet and there's already a storm coming?!"

Sarah grabbed her brand new rain slicker, harness, and deck shoes -- as the owner instructed her always to do when going top side -- and headed up the stairs. Walking several flights up, past the sealed ZEMCO computer rooms on the eighth and ninth floors all the way up to the twelfth where the old lighthouse beacon once shone deep into the darkness and fog, Sarah avoided the radar array dishes and belted into the railing. Looking out toward the horizon, she gasped, *Wow! Now that is truly one massive storm!* A giant wall of black clouds towered in the sky, stretching from horizon to horizon with lightning strikes, thunder, and the acrid smell of static electricity charging the air. After a few calming breaths, Sarah thought back to the owner's guidance on what to do next.

"If there be a storm coming," he'd explained to her, "forget the daily inspections. They'll wait. Instead, make sure all the storm guards are closed and locked. Everything battened down! The old girl is waterproof sure enough, but she's still manually operated and needs a little help here and there. So just close everything off and make sure all the shutters are firmly latched. Then she'll be storm proof and you'll be as safe inside as a wee baby in her mother's womb."

Sarah flinched with the mention of babies, holding back a few unexpected tears. *Because not all babies are safe*, she regretted knowing. *Not even in their mother's womb.*

The owner noticed, but didn't pursue it. "It should take less than an hour to close everything off. And make sure to check the eighth and ninth floors to ensure they're locked up tight too. The interior computer system rooms are already sealed and inaccessible, so don't worry about those. Just check the display panel monitors in the ante-room to ensure everything pairs green. If they do, great, close up and be on your way. If not, even if you think it's a shadow or a burnt out bulb or whatever, immediately get me on the shortwave radio! No delays! That's the most important duty you have and ninety percent of the reason you're up there. To monitor those instrument panels in real time four times daily. What you don't want are any flashing red signals. That would be a circumstance you call an emergency over. But otherwise, if everything is secure, you're welcome to head back to the apartment and enjoy your down time till the storm passes. Easy peasy, lemon squeasy, right!?"

Rigggghhhhtttt, Sarah thought. *I can do this. I know I can! And if I can't, well, the owner promised to be back on Friday. So if I have to tell him, 'Sorry, it's not going to work out,' and return the advance payment, then that's what I'll have to do.* Sarah vowed not to let that happen though. The contract had certain incentives and time sensitive milestones. And the pay was substantial – life changing substantial -- reflecting both the length of isolation and the importance of maintaining an uninterrupted monitoring of the eighth and ninth floors. Plus, she'd spent most of the first quarter advance to pay down her student loans. And, if she finished out the year, have enough to pay off the rest. *With an English Lit degree and a completed novel to show for it*, she thought. *Not bad for one year post-collegiate, huh! So we're not going to let any little noises derail us, are we?* She vowed.

Sarah began the lock down process, starting with the top exterior catwalk and closing everything down to the bottom level. And when she was sure everything was secured, headed back up to the ZEMCO ante-rooms on the eighth and ninth floor.

Now this is unexpected, she gasped entering the eighth-floor interior anteroom to discover the room painted entirely white. Not just white but stark white from floor to ceiling. Everything. All white. Which made the room look infinite. Like that weird art-house movie Brad always watched -- THX-1138 I believe it was called. Which he insisted was some deeply allegorical take on modern love and romance and not just some boringly bizarre sci-fi oddity. Give me Lady Chatterly's Lover any day.

Sarah immediately chastised herself for thinking of Brad at a time when she needed fewer distractions, not more. But she couldn't herself. Is that why you aborted your baby? Because of Brad and THX-1138 not being up to your standards?

"Yeah," Sarah sarcastically answered herself. Of course! What other reason could there be?

Well, she countered, I mention it because you weren't very enthused about becoming a mother when you realized you were pregnant is all. And fixing your "little problem" was on your mind even before you told Brad. Which, as far as I could tell, had nothing to do with his weird fetish movie. So what is your point exactly?

Point? Sarah argued back, He rejected me, didn't he?! Calling me a slut and whore. Denying the baby was even his just because I'd slept with someone else one time during spring break months earlier. I just wanted to make sure I wasn't missing anything."

But Brad didn't see it that way, did he? And why would he?

Yeah, but then he refused to go with me to the women's clinic even though I begged. We'd been each other's significant other since freshman year, so you'd think he'd have at least a little consideration and compassion. But no! I had to go by myself to have the procedure done and then take a ride-share home. And then the jerk had the arrogance to start dating Tammy Feldman not even two weeks later?! Now if that doesn't make him a bastard and prove my point, what does?!

What Sarah really resented was the fugue state of confusion the whole incident threw her into during her last semester of college. She'd pretended otherwise of course, but she was a basket case -- fighting through the guilt during finals. Smiling at her sorority sisters insisting she wasn't outraged over Brad dating *that-bitch* because the breakup had been mutual. Appearing elated at graduation for her family's sake. Even though she was dying inside. All at a time when she should've been celebrating.

I'm moving forward with my life now, aren't I? Sarah reasoned. *And taking a whole year to live on my own and put my life into perspective is the right kind of bold choice a modern woman is supposed to make. Channel everything into my writing and become a novelist. What could be more positive and reassuring than that?*

Sarah subdued her painful memories to re-focus on the task at hand. But for the second time in as many hours, another lighthouse experience had thrown her for a loop.

Regardless, she thought, I have a job to do. So what if these white ante-rooms remind me of Brad and THX-1138? And ending our baby's life. I'm built to conquer, not concede defeat.

After visually ensuring the display panels were in the green, Sarah walked up to the ninth floor to repeat the process. And when done, returned downstairs. Only to discover her apartment door standing wide open.

Crap, Sarah thought, I thought I closed that. Well, one more lighthouse mystery to adjust to.

But before she could, the *thump-bump-bump* returned, this time adding a drag. *Thump, bump, drag. Thump-bump-drag.* Not even twenty feet away in the neighboring apartment. Which the one the owner said was predominantly used for supplies and storage. Which freaked Sarah out and sent her ducking back into her own apartment, slamming the door and locking it from the inside. Backing away from the noise as it picked up tempo – *bump-thump-drag. Bump-thump-drag.*

What IS that?!

Bump-thump-drag. Bump-thump-drag. Bump-thump-drag.

Damn! What could that be?! Sarah started looking around for some kind of weapon, realizing she'd only brought one small Swiss army pocketknife. Did I really think I'd be safe up here and wouldn't need any protection? How stupid was I?

Bump-thump-drag. Bump-thump-drag. Sarah froze when the distinct sound of a door opened, then closed next door. Then the bump-thump-drag approached down the hallway. Like a mummy's walk. Closer...closer...until...UNTIL...someone knocked on her front door.

Sarah yelped.

"Hello in there?" a young man's voice called out.

Sarah screamed covering her mouth with her hands.

A pause, then another gentle knock. "Hi in there. It's okay. Sorry if I scared you. I didn't mean to. And I don't bite, I promise. Honest. What I mean is I'm not dangerous or anything. And I wasn't trying to scare you. I just need your help is all."

"Were you that bumping noise I just heard?" Sarah asked. "What are you doing over there anyway? Why are you even here?! You shouldn't be here!"

"Yes, sorry. Explanations first. My apologies. I heard you arrive this morning and I tried to teleport away, but the weight shackled to my leg kept pulling me back. That was the noise you were hearing. I've made several attempts now to leap, with a severely bruised leg to show for it, but no matter what I try I can't seem to break free. Maybe you can help me. I could certainly use your help."

"Ummm....." Sarah replied holding still. Despite being petrified, she almost instinctively opened the door.

"Hello in there?" the young man chimed in. "Sorry if I scared you. My name's Jessie by the way. Jessiah Vaughn, but I go by Jessie. I'm staying in the room next to yours. Well, technically, I'm a squatter cause the owner doesn't know I'm living here right now. But I was here all last season with Kate and she didn't mind. She was the caretaker before you, if you didn't know."

"Kate? Is she here? Where's Kate?"

"No, she's not here. She left at the end of the year. Which is why I assume you're here now. You're the new lighthouse custodian for the winter season, yes?"

"For the whole year actually, but yes, I am. That still doesn't explain why you're here."

"Like I said, I admit it. I'm a squatter. I stayed on after Kate left."

"Oh? So you've been here all of last year?"

"Something like that. Time gets away from you up here. And I've been stuck to this weight for...I'm not exactly sure how long. Awhile. I know it's still winter, but I don't know the exact date. And I've eaten through most of my supplies."

"It's January 21st. Do you know the year?"

"Of course, I'm not crazy. Just stuck. If it's January, that would make the year 2003."

"Well, that's correct at least." Sarah continued looking around for a weapon while trying to think tactically. Jessie sounded okay. Calm. But this was real life and people didn't teleport. Or squat in a remote lighthouse in the middle of nowhere tied to a weight without good reason. Which could mean he was crazy. *Yeah, she thought, but does that mean he's dangerous? It's a fine line, right? And I am trapped here with him for the time being. At least till this storm eases up. It's not like I can run outside and catch a ride from the seagulls.*

"Hey," Jessie called in. "I don't mind talking from the other side of the door. Really, I don't. And I understand you weren't expecting anyone to be here, so it's cool. I've thrown you for a loop. But I promise you, I'm not dangerous. And I swear I won't hurt you in any fashion. It's just not in me. I know it's a matter of trusting a stranger, but I hope you will. Plus, I smelled that coffee you were brewing earlier, along with the bacon, and it has me drooling. I haven't eaten anything but beans for some time. So maybe I can come in for breakfast and formally introduce myself? Show you that you can trust me? What do you think?"

Now what? Sarah wondered. She was in a quandary. *The real question is should I open the door? He is currently standing between me and my exit seven floors down so realistically there's only one way to find out if he's a problem or not. By opening the door and going through the problem. Not around. So I suppose there's my answer.*

Go around? Sarah countered, *like how you went around your Brad / baby problem?*

"Stop that! I've had enough of you!" Sarah barked to herself.

"Sorry?" Jessie answered. "Stop? I'm not sure what to stop. I'm just stuck is all. And I am really sorry to be bothering you, but I'm here on a mission and have to see it through. I promise. I wouldn't be if I didn't need your help."

"Hey, umm, Jessie?" Sarah called out.

"Yes?"

"I'm going to trust you when you say you're not dangerous, okay? I'll take your word as a gentleman. Or at the very least, as a decent human being, okay?" *There you go, Sarah, set your character expectations.* "So I'm going to open the door. But you should know I have...I have, umm, a *flare gun*. And if you try anything, I'm going to shoot you in the face. You'll end up blind with third degree burns all over your face."

"I understand. Sounds serious. Thank you for trusting me."

Sarah opened the door. She obviously didn't have a flare gun, but she did put her hand in her jacket pocket and pointed her pocket at Jessie.

Only Jessie turned out to be a dream. All smiles and soulfully warm eyes. He was tall and gangly too, looking puppy dog lost and really underfed. And his hair, a brown curly mess, looked like it hadn't been combed or cut properly for some time. Even his clothes, plaid shirt over khaki pants, looked adorably worn and disheveled. To the point Sarah thought he looked like the sweetest Labrador you wanted to clean up and play with. Not a dangerous criminal or escaped mental patient.

"Hey," Jessie smiled. "Nice to meet you. Am I okay to come in?"

"Umm," Sarah replied feeling a confusing dichotomy of physical attraction against a generalized fear of the unknown stranger. And to confuse things further, she noticed Jessie did have a ball and chain attached to his left leg -- like the kind they used on prisoners in those old time prison movies.

Well, at least I know I can outrun him, she thought. "You can come in. I'm Sarah by the way."

"Jessie," he replied. "Nice to meet you. Now about that coffee." *Thump-bump-drag.*

"Jessie? Why do you have a weight strapped to your leg?"

"Oh, I did it to myself unfortunately. An experiment really. I've been trying to increase the weight bearing capacity of my teleports. Currently, the limit is my body weight plus forty pounds, give or take, for one mile with a five minute in-transit time. Though there have been a few safety issues to adjust for."

“That leg weight looks like a lot more than forty pounds.”

“Don’t I know it! It’s fifty by my estimate. It has me grounded with a few difficulties and is more than I can teleport.”

“Difficulties?”

“I can’t teleport that much weight, obviously. Forty pounds I can, though the weight tends to randomly drop out mid-teleport. But anything over fifty has me completely land locked.”

“Why not just stop if it’s so problematic. Or take off the weight?”

“Well, not to be dramatic, but I have reasons I can’t exactly explain at the moment. And I’m feeling pressured because I’m running out of time.”

“Running out of time for what?”

“I’m not sure I can explain that either. I want to, but it might be difficult to understand under present circumstances. Can you trust me when I say it’s important without me having to explain further? Till the time is right?”

“I don’t know. You’re talking about something physically impossible. Teleportation. Which is hard enough to take seriously. And you still haven’t said why you’re still here. So how am I to believe you? Just because you say so?”

“I know. I know. I totally understand how much easier it is to believe what you can see. But like I said, I haven’t been able to teleport successfully with this much weight attached to my body. And it’s weakened me.”

“So take it off. Take the weight off.”

“I would, but I seem to have lost the key.”

Sarah looked at the lock attached to the ball and chain, then started eyeing the door.

Jessie put up his hands in surrender. “Yes, I know how dubious this all must sound to you. I have no way to reassure you outside my word. And I don’t blame you for looking to bail. But I’m trying to be as honest and forthright as I can and still have you trust me. Which, I agree, if I were in your shoes, would be difficult. After all, how could anyone sane make up such an insane story, right?” Jessie chuckled.

Sarah smiled thinking, *I’ve had that very thought myself.*

Jessie turned his ear to the storm outside -- listening to the rain fall, the wind howl, and heavy wave’s crash against the lighthouse frame. “She’s really blowing out there. That sounds like a pretty big storm.”

Sarah imagined a big storm brewing inside her too. *For all I know, she thought, this situation could turn into a great romantic meet-cute worth writing about.* Like those “star crossed” lover stories her sorority sisters always swooned over and begged her to write more of. *Wouldn’t this make them all green with envy – especially the girls who’d rudely gossiped over her and Brad’s break up – claiming he’d hurt her so bad she had to run away to the middle of nowhere just to get over him. But what if she triumphantly returned home not only debt free, along with her first novel, but with a soul mate to boot? That’d shut them up for sure! The glass slipper on the proverbial other foot.*

Sitting in the kitchenette, with Jessie eating the last of her breakfast, Sarah appreciated his table manners. He was quiet and didn’t slurp the coffee or chew his food with an open mouth. And unlike Brad, Jessie seemed relaxed, attentive, and respectful. Enough so that, by the end of breakfast, she’d started thinking of him as a potential companion.

“Thank you for your hospitality,” Jessie smiled, tipping a pretend hat toward her. “My compliments to the chef.”

"Well," Sarah curtsied back, "I do what I can with what I have." And felt sufficiently emboldened to press further. "So, this teleportation thing. How did that start?"

"You wouldn't believe me."

"You mean it's more incredulous than you sitting here with a weight attached to your leg claiming you can teleport while eating my breakfast?"

"Touché. Well, I suppose it wouldn't hurt to talk about it. Nor, I imagine, would it change anything. The first time I teleported I was with Kate. Right here in this very lighthouse actually. We were in the bedroom *in delecto flagrante*, as they say, approaching the, um,...final moment. And when that moment arrived, *BOOM!* We teleported."

"I don't think I'm following. You teleported during sex?"

"More like during climax. It happened when I orgasmed. Both Kate and I. I was still holding on to her and we just shot into the dark together."

Sarah couldn't help laughing a bit. "You're saying when you came, you went?"

"*Simultaneously*," Jessie laughed. "I teleported both her and I naked out into the hallway just outside the apartment. Kate loved it. She said it felt like flowing down a warm water slide in the dark till splashing back into reality. Like in an amusement park. For me it was all tension and a gut feeling till release and landing."

"Wait, didn't you say earlier you couldn't teleport that much weight. I don't know this Kate, but I doubt she weighs less than fifty pounds."

"You're right. Kate was probably around a hundred and twenty pounds, give or take, back then. But for some reason, as long as we were having sex and I climaxed, we could teleport. Though there were a few hitches."

“Like what?”

“Like Kate determined where we landed. Not me. I couldn’t think clear enough in the moment of climax -- my mind would go blank, you know?”

“I have an idea, yeah.”

“But Kate could.”

Sarah laughed. “I can see why that would bother you.”

“It didn’t really bother me at first. I mean I didn’t mind that she decided. Which was fine till she adopted this kamikaze attitude about it – kind of a risky streak. She started experimenting.”

“What do you mean experimenting?”

“She wanted to see how many variables she could control -- where we landed, if we were together or separate, how far away, how close together – that sorta thing. She would send us three floors up. Or down. Or split us apart so she landed in one area of the lighthouse while I landed in another. And then there were the other factors. Like how challenging it was for her to hold multiple images in her mind clearly. A few times I nearly landed inside a wall because she was multi-tasking. Or another time I got hurt landing on the rocks outside while she landed a mile down the road. Once she sent me a half mile out into the ocean claiming she was as trying to picture me on a beach somewhere. Or to the cliffs above. Or once to the catwalk at the top of the lighthouse where we nearly fell off. If I hadn’t grabbed her and the railing at the same time, we would’ve gone over and plummeted to our deaths. But she got a kick out of it.”

“Why didn’t you just stop?”

The way Jessie smirked said it all. “Because I loved her. How do you say no to someone when you’re in love? But I did try to slow her down – to exert more control. Which I

was discovering was possible...until Kate became obsessed with those sealed rooms up on the eighth and ninth floors."

"The white rooms?"

"Those sure. But more the locked rooms just beyond with all the computers. The sealed rooms. Have you been up there yet?"

"Yes. To the white rooms, but not inside the computer rooms. The owner said those were closed off."

"They were. That's why Kate wanted to teleport in there and confirm what was inside. But we had to go together so she could get out because there are no door handles to those doors. Did you notice that?"

"I did."

"Kate convinced me to help her. And I admit I was fairly curious myself so I agreed readily enough. But it was more difficult than you can imagine to blindly teleport somewhere you haven't been. We kept either landing in the white ante-rooms or so close to the wall I thought, at some point, we were going to split our bodies in half landing in the wall. Which could've happened. But then, on one of our last efforts, Kate said she felt herself pass through the sealed room on the eighth floor and caught a glimpse of what was inside."

"Did she really?"

"I believe so. Yeah. Because right after we landed, the display panels on the eighth and ninth floor went crazy -- turned red across the board and this terrible alarm went off. I thought we were busted for sure, but not a minute later all the alarms stopped and both panels reset to green."

"What happened then?"

"We waited to see if the owner called, or someone from ZEMCO. But no one did. Then,

a few days later, Kate called the owner to report there'd been a fluke incident and that the sensors had briefly turned from green to red and back to green again. He got real nervous and told us to sit tight while he called his ZEMCO contacts. Then not even ten minutes later, he called back saying there were no anomalies and all their sensors were fine apparently. Even the surveillance video showed clear. He sounded relieved too. Still it was scary."

"Is that when Kate left?"

"No. Kate didn't want to leave till she actually got inside one of those rooms. After that incident, she'd become even more convinced ZEMCO was involved in some deep conspiracy against the American people – like the JFK thing or Area 51 or Bigfoot. She swore she'd seen some kind of alien box inside the computer room similar to a "coffin" – her word not mine – with alien writing all over it and hooked up with wires to a wall of computers. She became obsessed about teleporting back in there to get some kind of evidence we could use to blow the lid off the whole affair. Again, her words not mine. But try as I might, I couldn't talk her out of it."

"If you didn't agree, then why didn't you just stop having sex with her?"

"I tried. I wanted to stop. I did. But you have to understand I was completely in love with her. And when you're up here all alone with no one else around, just you and your lover, perspective becomes a malleable thing. You know what I mean?"

"Unfortunately yes, I do."

"I did want to stop, really. But I was more afraid of disappointing Kate. So we kept trying. Only, I stopped climaxing which meant we stopped teleporting."

"How'd you do that?"

"I started practicing solo teleportation by myself. Just to exhaust myself, you know, so I would be too tired to climax with Kate later."

"Does that mean what I think it means?"

"Solo teleporting? Yes, I began taking my manhood into my own hand, relatively speaking."

"Ahh, I see. Kate probably didn't like that."

"Not in the least. You can't keep secrets in a place like this. And Kate was pretty pissed off when she put it together and discovered what I was doing. For a couple of weeks before that, she thought it was her. But she did promise to let it go."

"Did she?"

"No. She just bid her time. And when she was sure I wasn't taking any "solo" trips, she started experimenting again, without my consent, the minute we started climax teleporting again."

Sarah felt a twinge of guilt over the mention of Kate being duplicitous. She wasn't sure she, herself, hadn't acted dissimilarly with Brad. Maybe she did unconsciously let herself get pregnant over the guilt of her spring break affair. Even though alcohol had been involved. She'd done the right thing and confessed like she thought she was supposed to, expecting Brad to forgive her. But he didn't. Nor did he take her confession well. For the months that followed, he pulled away and seemed like he might break up with her. Which Sarah had no intention of letting him do.

It hadn't taken much to entice Brad into having sex with her again, even though he claimed he still needed a little time to think things through. *But the pregnancy, I swear, was mostly unintentional. Maybe Kate had her own good reasons too.*

"I'm sure Kate was in love with you and had her reasons," she told Jessie.

"I don't want to talk about that."

"What happened after that? How did you two work it out? Did you get inside the room before she left?"

"Yes. Fate intervened...if you believe in such things."

"What does that mean?"

"Fate? I don't know if I can explain that part yet. I just need to get this ball and chain off to finish my mission. I think it's time I did that. With your help, if you will."

As far as plotlines went, Sarah knew what Jessie was asserting was a *contrivance of convenience* – something authors used to rationalize plot twists without giving away too much information. She just didn't know why. Not yet anyway. Though she was curious.

"So, you lost the key, huh?" Sarah asked.

"Yes. I'm a hundred percent certain I put the key in my pants pocket. But it must've slipped out because I haven't been able to find it. It's got to be somewhere in the apartment next door -- that's where I've been nearly the whole time. Bad luck on my part, huh?"

"Sure seems that way."

"Look Sarah, if you'll help me find the key and get this damn weight off, I promise I'll demonstrate my ability."

"And explain why you're really staying here all this time? I mean do you really expect me to believe you've been hanging out since Kate left just to practice teleporting. If you even can. I may've fallen off the turnip truck, but not yesterday. If you want me to trust you, then maybe you can return the compliment."

“Okay, yes,” Jessie replied nodding his head, “you’re a hundred percent correct. I see I’ve done you a disservice. Fair enough. I’ll make this vow here and now – if you help me get free, I’ll not only demonstrate my ability to teleport, but tell you everything about why I’m still here. And even let you try to help if you’re still interested.”

“Okay, Jessie, I’ll play along for now and help. I’ll go look next door. But I’m also going to lock you inside this apartment first. I want to trust you, but a girl can’t be too careful I suppose. So if I hear you move in the least, I’m going to come back and shoot you.”

“Oh, right, the flare gun,” Jessie grinned. “Sure, your terms are agreeable. I accept. I more than accept, I support your decision. But before you go, I do have one more favor to ask. Can I use your bathroom? The coffee seems to have run right through me.”

“Sure. Please put the seat down when you’re done. I’ll be back in a minute.”

Sarah left, locking the apartment door behind her and heading next door. *Why aren’t you running away now?* She asked herself. *This is your chance.*

Because there’s nowhere to run at the moment. Or did you think I could just go outside for a casual walk in this big storm? Just who is the crazy one here, exactly?

Bite me! Sarah replied. *This isn’t about the storm and you know it!*

Sarah looked into the other apartment. But other than a sleeping bag, a backpack, and a small trash bin filled with empty cans of Bush beans, the apartment was empty. She methodically searched everywhere, including inside the discarded cans in the trash, without success. Until something occurred to her. It was quiet. Too quiet. She hadn’t heard any noise coming from her apartment. No bump-thump-drag. No Jessie. No nothing. Just the sound of the wind and rain, thunder and lightning outside.

Sarah considered her situation again and came to a decision. *This is just getting too uncomfortable. Not panic time, I think, but the best thing I can do now is get to the CB radio and call the owner. Which is sitting on the desk in the living room. Then, if I have to, I can run out and get picked up down the road somewhere. Crap, why am I so bad at this whole thing?*

Heading back to her apartment and unlocking the door, Sarah got a strong whiff of lilacs. *Weird, she thought. Why do I smell flowers?* “Jessie?” she called in. No response. “Jessie? Are you here?” Nothing. *Well, that sucks! If he’s hiding around the corner waiting to jump on me, I’m gonna be really pissed.*

Sarah cautiously entered the apartment, tiptoe-ing as she went, trying to look everywhere at once. But no Jessie. Not in the living room, kitchenette, single bedroom, closet or bathroom. However, in the bathroom, she did discover the ball and chain with no Jessie attached. *Now where did he go? Crap!* Sarah thought. *Alright, I’ve had enough of this.* Sarah quickly went to the living room desk and turned on the CB, dialing to channel four as the owner instructed. *I believe this officially qualifies as a problem he’ll need to deal with.*

“Hello?” Sarah said keying the mic, receiving only static in return. “HELLO?!” she repeated with the same results. “Darn this storm!” she cursed dialing through several more channels. *And this is only my first day. If this is how it’s gonna be, I’m definitely going home. Because I don’t think I take any more of this.*

“Whatcha doing, Sarah?” Jessie asked from behind her.

Sarah screamed.

This time Jessie did laugh. “Oh, sorry! I scared you again. Sorry, I wasn’t trying to.”

“But you did! Where did you come from? Where’d you go? Don’t come any closer! You stay there! I swear I’ll shoot you if you don’t!” Sarah reached for her pocket.

“Oh, yes, the flare gun. We can dispense with that little lie. I know you don’t have one. You’re a liar just like Kate was.” Jessie gave her an angry look. “But did you know we actually have a flare gun in the emergency kit in the cupboard?” He held up a red handled flare gun. “Like this one. Actually, this one exactly. It came from that kit. You’ll forgive me, but I had to check.”

“Don’t hurt me!” *How did he get between me and the door again?*

“I won’t as long as you don’t make me.” Jessie grinned, his puppy-dog smile gone replaced with a maniac’s grin. “But I will if you push me.”

Sarah tried not to panic. “What do you want? How are you free? You said you needed my help, but now you’re threatening me! What game are you playing?!”

“Well, it was the damndest thing. I went to the bathroom like I said because I had to...you know...relieve myself. Sorry to be indelicate, but it’s been a while and I was a little backed up. I sat down on the toilet and pushed. Maybe I pushed too hard because the next thing you know I teleported down one flight down, sans the weight. Finally. I don’t know, I never thought straining through a bowel movements would queue up the teleportation. But it did and now I’m free to finish what I started.” Jessie practically danced in place.

“Okay, you’re free. So now you can leave. If you can teleport like you say, then it won’t take you long to get to town.”

“Yes, that is a consideration. Only I still have one last piece of business to conclude before I leave.”

“Whatever it is, I don’t care. I don’t want anything to do with that anymore. You said you needed help to get free. And now you’re free, so leave.”

“Not until I get Kate.”

“Kate? What do you mean get Kate? What does that mean?” *Here comes the twist he’s been holding back.* Sarah thought. *Why he’s really here.* “You said Kate left.”

“I’m going to tie you up now, Sarah. I don’t want to, but I need a little time to finish what I started and I don’t want you interfering. Or calling anyone on the radio like you just tried to do. I promise you once I’m done, I’ll come back and untie you. Then I’ll leave for good and you’ll never see me again. You can call whomever you want after that. But if you interfere or try to stop me, I’ll have to stop you.”

“No, don’t do that. Please. Just stop and think what you’re doing. You don’t have to tie me up, okay? I won’t do anything or say anything to anyone. I’ll even leave so you can finish what you have to.”

“It’s not that easy. I’d like to believe you, but you’ve already proven you lie. And I might need you at some point. Maybe I won’t, but I can’t tell that until I’ve tried to get Kate out.”

“You said Kate already left for home. Now who’s lying?”

“Sure I did say that, but only because if you knew Kate was still here then you might become too suspicious to trust me. Or help me.”

“Why is Kate still here? Where is she? I’m confused.”

“I’m going to tie you up first.”

“NO! DON’T do that! If you try, I’ll fight. I’ll gouge your eyes out and make a run for it.”

“Sorry Sarah. It’s not personal. I know I’m asking a lot, but it has to be this way. Till I finish what I started.”

Sarah made a break for the door, but Jessie intercepted. And dragged her to the ball and chain, handcuffing it to her leg.

"There," Jessie said, breathing heavy and stepping back to avoid Sarah's fists. She'd definitely landed a few that hurt him. "All secure. Now, that wasn't so bad, right? And I'm hoping you'll understand. I'm honestly not trying to hurt you."

"THEN LET ME GO!"

"Sorry, not yet. Not till I'm done upstairs. I'll be right back."

I have to flip the script on this, Sarah thought. It may be my only chance at getting free from this insanity. "Wait! At least tell me before you go why you're doing all this. At least I'll know. Maybe I'll even sympathize and be on your side."

Jessie looked at Sarah for several minutes -- his eyes boring into her. Then he replied, "Okay, why not. I don't see how it'll change anything. Kate is upstairs inside the eighth floor sealed computer room."

"She's inside the room? Right now?"

"Yes."

"How?"

"On our last teleport together, she successfully made it inside."

"Weren't you with her?"

"No, I landed in the white ante-room outside. I told her not to mess with those rooms or experiment further! But she didn't listen."

"Why didn't you let her out?"

"Couldn't. Like I said, there are no door handles. Not on the outside or inside. And there are no keys or obvious signs of how to open those doors. For all we knew, the only way in or out, was through some kind of access codes punched into the display

panel in the white ante-room. Which neither of us had. I suppose the owner does. And probably someone from ZEMCO."

"So you called the owner, right? And had him drive out to let Kate out."

"Yeah, but no."

"No?"

"No."

"Why not?"

"Sarah, did you know when you took this job that Pigeon Point lighthouse is under the authority of the federal government?"

"No. So what. What does that have to do with anything?"

"I found some documents in that very desk there identifying this lighthouse as federally protected land."

"So."

"Don't you see, if the land is federal and so is the lighthouse, then it's a federal crime to trespass in restricted areas inside federally designated locations. And that's before you get to the whole creepy alien-computer connection inside those sealed rooms. Didn't you notice the warning on the display panel in the white ante-room?"

"No."

"Well, just being inside one of those rooms without authorization is punishable by incarceration in Leavenworth – or more likely Guantanamo Bay -- on espionage charges. Or whatever else they think up."

"You're being paranoid."

"I don't think so. There's a reason the pay is so good for someone who's relatively unskilled labor. Or did you not consider that? Besides, do you think the owner, or anyone from ZEMCO, would believe how Kate got into one of their sealed rooms? Or that I can teleport? No, they'd accuse us of being spies or eco-terrorists or something like that and lock us away for life. And there's nothing we could do to stop them. It's not like we can just call the police way out here. Even if we wanted to. If you haven't noticed, there don't seem to be a lot of people around to notice or stop them."

"That's not the true. This is America. And you're an American citizen."

"Now who's being naïve? Since when has that every stopped their kind?"

"That still sounds awfully paranoid to me."

"I'm not! Stop saying that! I know what I'm talking about!"

Sarah could see the irrational light in Jessie's eyes and knew for sure he was plain crazy. Which meant he was dangerous if pushed in the wrong direction. *How could I have ever believed him?* She wondered. *I'm such an idiot. The only way out is through.* "Look, Jessie, I have an idea. How about I call the owner and tell him about Kate? Then he'll blame me. I won't even mention you. You can just teleport away."

"Sorry, but that won't work."

"Why not?"

"How are you going to explain Kate being dead inside the sealed ZEMCO room on the eighth floor? Even if you could, do you think they'd believe you?"

"Kate is dead?"

"Yes."

"You killed Kate? Did you kill Kate?"

"No, of course not! I loved her! But I couldn't reach her. I tried! Oh believe me, I tried. But I couldn't get into that sealed room. And every time I tried -- and I tried till I became dizzy and passed out many times -- I always ended up outside in the white ante-room. I just couldn't reach her."

"You left her in the computer room to die then?"

"Are you not listening?! I did everything I could! I tried for weeks. Well past when she stopped talking. Or tapping on the door. Or making any sounds. And still I tried, but it was no use."

"Didn't the alarms go off? Didn't the panel turn to red like before?"

"No."

"No?"

"NO! I don't know why, but they didn't!"

Jessie was looking more unhinged than before. To the point Sarah realized, even though his story wasn't adding up -- and becoming more unbelievable by the minute -- she didn't need him to know that. She just needed to find a way to escape. "Well, maybe Kate's still alive, just in hibernation or something. I've heard that can happen. People drop into a deep trance and be brought back months later. I tell you what, Jessie. I'll call the owner, get the codes and go in and rescue her. You said you loved her. Let me help you rescue her."

"No, she's dead."

"Well, maybe I could pull her out anyway. It must've been hard for you to leave her in there. I totally understand. So let me help you get her out."

"I had no other recourse, you understand?! What else was I to do? It wasn't my fault!"

“No, I don’t think it was.” Then something occurred to Sarah. “If Kate is still here, then the owner must be concerned. Aren’t you afraid the owner will come looking for Kate?”

“He doesn’t know about this. He thinks Kate went home.”

“How?”

“I emailed him from Kate’s online account pretending to be her and told him she was heading home a little earlier than expected. She asked him to forward her last check by mail. Which he emailed back no problem. For a top secret lighthouse, they’re pretty cavalier about security around here.”

“Didn’t he come up here and check? Or inspect the lighthouse?”

“No. Not that I know of. No one has been here or shown up till you did this morning.”

“Oh goodness.”

“So look Sarah. Here’s how it’s going to go. For some reason, I feel like I can get Kate out now. Somehow I think I’m strong enough. You had a lot to do with that. Thank you. But if I can’t, I may have to resort to the original way. It’s not what I want, but I might have to. And if I can’t get Kate out on my own, then there’s a chance I’ll need you and I to work together to teleport in there. I’m afraid time has run out and I’m out of options.”

Sarah couldn’t believe what she was hearing. *Was this really possible? How did I end up like this? Because a boy I was in love with knocked me up and then insisted I have an abortion? Was this some kind of karma for killing my unborn child?*

“Jessie, no matter what you think, you should never resort to that! You’re not that kind of a guy, right? Just let me call the owner. I promise you, I’ll take all the heat and get Kate out for you. You just have to trust me. No one will ever know about you. You

can just head out. And you'll have fulfilled your responsibility to Kate by letting me get her out for you."

"I feel pretty strongly about getting her myself. Like she's my responsibility. Even if you and I do so together."

"I'll get Kate, I promise. But not your way. I won't do that. And I guarantee you, if you try it that way, it won't work."

"Why not? It did with Kate."

"Because you said it yourself. Kate was the one who focused on the destination during teleportation, not you. So Kate determined where you went. Well, I promise you, if you try to force me into having sex with you – if you rape me, I'll never focus on getting you in that room! I'll picture us being a hundred miles away in the middle of the ocean just so you'll drown. Or imagine you deep underground and bury you alive till you suffocate. You'll never get me to think about getting you into that room if you rape me!"

"You could die too if you did that."

"Maybe. But I'll take you with me, that's for sure. Only listen! It doesn't have to be that way. Maybe we can try it my way first? If that doesn't work, I'll consider doing it your way."

"You will?"

"Yes. But first I'll get Kate by calling the owner. This will let you fulfil your duty to her, just with me being your proxy. No one says you have to teleport her out. And I can make sure the owner finds her, cares for her, and returns her to her family without involving you in any way. He'll never know you were even up here if you leave before he arrives."

“How will you explain Kate being in the room and all?”

“I don’t have to. It’s my first day on the job today, remember. And there’s no connection between Kate and I. Nor any reason I should know she’s up in one of those computer rooms. For all I know, she left to return home, right? Just like you said. So I’ll just say I was performing my first day inspections and noticed something happening with the control panel on the eighth floor during the storm. The owner said to call right away if I thought anything was off. Well, I’ll just tell him the panel on the eighth floor kept flashing red during the storm. Or something glitchy like that. I’ll call the owner, per his instructions, and report it just like he said to. And he’ll come up here and actually open the door and find her. I won’t know anything about what’s inside the room simply because I literally just arrived. So they won’t suspect me. And if you’re gone, then there will be no connection to Kate and no one will suspect you, right? They’ll figure she just made her way into the room and became trapped.”

“The owner will know.”

“As far as the owner knows, Kate was all alone up here, right? So he won’t know. You said it yourself, the owner doesn’t know you’re here because you’re squatting. And if you’re gone when he shows up, he still won’t. So if he discovers Kate, and I just got here, and you’re gone, then that will throw the responsibility off either of us and onto the owner. Or some stranger. They’ll think some stranger came along. It’ll be a mystery for sure, but not one you or I will be suspected of, right? And they won’t know what to believe -- I have an alibi for having just arrived, you were never here, and the owner is the only one between the three of us who has access to those rooms, right?”

Jessie smiled. “You make several good points. Okay, let’s try it your way. I’m going to leave. But I won’t go far until I’m sure you’ve kept your word. I’ll watch from a

distance and make sure. So if you don't do what you say, I'll teleport back here when no one's around and make you pay. You understand? Do you agree?"

"Jessie, I give you my word. I'll get Kate out and get her back to her family so they can put her to rest." *If there even is a Kate.* "And I'll take the responsibility for making sure she's treated decently from here on out. As long as you do the same and keep your word."

"Deal," Jessie smiled before turning and walking away. "I'm going to trust you. But, I'll be watching from a distance."

Jessie walked out of the apartment and Sarah breathed a little easier. She was still shaken, and very scared, but despite her fear, she felt like she'd possibly won her life back. If she could just stay calm and sane till the owner arrived. She'd started to feel like the world might just slip away.

With Jessie gone, Sarah wasted no time dragging the ball and chain over to the CB radio to call for the owner. She still had to wait several more hours till the storm let up and he could arrive to pick her up, but that wasn't what bothered her. Even with Jessie gone, she could still feel his presence -- and prayed he wouldn't return. *Or is just hiding somewhere in the lighthouse, she imagined, waiting to materialize behind her at any moment. Or come around the corner and scare her.* It was the most unnerving sensation Sarah had ever felt. Nor was she sure she could ever rid herself of such paranoia.

At one point, waiting for the storm to pass, Sarah thought she'd started hallucinating. Because, when she looked up, Brad was standing in the doorway next to Jessie, who was holding her unborn baby in his arms. And when the baby started crying, Brad screamed, "Get out of here!" Which must've woken her up because when she looked again, no one was there and the only noises she could hear were her own whimpers and cries.

“Poor girl sounds like a basket case,” the lighthouse owner explained to his ZEMCO contact before setting out for the long drive to pick Sarah up. He’d listened to her hysterical explanations over the shortwave -- something about the storm and the ZEMCO computer rooms and the control panels flashing red, which made him sit up in his seat. “She said both panels on the eighth and ninth floor were flashing red. Maybe the big electrical storm up there is playing havoc...or maybe she’s hallucinating. I don’t know. It happens occasionally with a few who’ve never been that alone before. Regardless, I’m going to get her right now and should know more in a few hours.”

The owner’s ZEMCO contact said something to him over the phone.

“She swears the panels are red. Flashing red. I don’t know what other color she’d mistake it with. You’re sure your sensors are still saying they aren’t? They’re all green, hmm? Well, regardless, I need to go get her. I’ll call you from the lighthouse when I get there.”

When the owner arrived at Pigeon Point four hours later, he found Sarah holed up in the keeper’s apartment with a ball and chain locked around her ankle. *Why in the hell did she do that*, he wondered. Still, it wasn’t the first time one of his lighthouse keepers had freaked out, but never so soon or to this degree. Usually, they just got a little punchy and needed company for a few hours. Then they’d be fine. *But this poor girl actually shackled herself down. Never seen that before.*

“There you go, little missy. You’re safe now.” The owner retrieved his bolt cutters from his truck to cut her free. And wrapped a blanket around her for good measure. Then, with his guidance, walked Sarah back down to his truck. The isolation, and the storm, had obviously unmoored her because she continued babbling about a strange boy who’d taken her hostage – who could teleport – and who had locked her to the ball and chain. Then something about aborting her baby and leaving a dead girl in the computer

rooms to have sex with before “he’d” let her go free. It was all very confusing. *Poor girl*, the owner thought. *I think I need to take her to the hospital. None of what she’s saying makes any sense. The poor girl’s obviously gone mental.*

“I need to head back inside before we can leave, little missy. To check the computer rooms and verify what you’ve been telling me,” the owner explained. “Just wait for me here and I’ll be right back. You’re as safe as a baby...err....you’ll be safe in the truck while I’m gone. I won’t be but a few minutes.”

“Okay,” Sarah mumbled, “But leave the truck keys here.” She planned to keep the doors locked till he returned. And drive away if she needed to.

“Sure thing,” the owner replied dropping the keys on the seat and heading into the lighthouse.

Sarah tried to remain calm. She took the keys, rolled up the windows and locked both doors. Then sat as still as she could. Till an hour had passed and she realized the owner hadn’t returned. She’d been staring out the window looking for signs of Jessie and lost track of time. Now something didn’t feel right.

“Hello?” she called out rolling down the truck window.

No answer.

I’m not getting out and going back in there! The hell with that! Sarah cracked the truck door and tentatively got out of the vehicle. “HELLO!” she called louder toward the lighthouse. “HELLO!”

“Hello, Sarah,” Jessie answered, smiling as he walked out of the lighthouse door into the sunlight -- his face, hands, and shirt covered in blood. Gone was the puppy dog lost smile replaced by a most sinister grin.

Sarah screamed.

“Now, there you go again, Sarah. You startle so easily. And then there’s the lying! Don’t you know lying ruins trust in a relationship! And now you’ve violated my trust by breaking your promise! You told the owner about me! About me and Kate and the computer room. I heard you talking on the radio. Then the owner arrives, but instead of helping, he comes upstairs and tries to arrest me. He attacked me Sarah and now Kate is still stuck in the computer room! Nothing you promised came true. But unlike you, I’m a man of my word. I follow through with what I promise. Do you know what that means, Sarah?!”

Sarah screamed again and jumped back into the truck -- locking the doors as fast as she could.

“Sarah, don’t run away. I still need your help! You still need to help me! I intend to make you help me!”

Sarah got behind the wheel, fumbling with the keys till she could get the right one into the ignition to start the engine. All the while chanting, *I’m not gonna die! I’m not gonna die! I’m not going to die!*

Yes you are, you stupid girl, she answered herself, *unless you get this truck moving and run the bastard over before it’s too late! Now get your ass moving girl!*

Shut up! Shut up! SHUT UP! Why can’t you just shut up and leave me alone!

“Saarahhh!” Jessie yelled advancing toward the truck. “You broke your promise and you LIED! You told the owner about me. And now he’s dead as a consequence. That one’s on you! I told you what they do if you trespass up here.”

Sarah started the engine, threw the truck into gear, and mashed the accelerator down as hard as she could – nearly stalling the engine. But the engine caught, the truck lurched forward and Jessie barely jumped out of the way in time. Sarah cranked hard on the

wheel, turning just in time to avoid hitting the lighthouse. Till she hit the gas again, spinning the wheels and taking off in the opposite direction away from the lighthouse.

“SAARRRAHHHH!” Jessie screamed after her. “I’LL BE SEEING YOU SOON, SARAH! *Don’t forget I can TELEPORT!!!*”

The End.