

After the two of them got into bed, Beth couldn't help but smile to herself. She couldn't wait for tomorrow. A sea of excitement burst through her as she found herself imagining how happy he was going to be when he found out that she had organized a thoughtful activity and trip for the two of them. It was almost as if a clearer, bluer sky was on the horizon for their relationship. Scrunching her shoulders in a child-like smile, she closed her eyes and allowed herself to sink into a dreamlike state.

The following morning, as she heard the front door closing again, she shot out of bed and ran down the stairs. She felt like a kid at Christmas. Without even dressing, she sat by the next and got her papers out and spread them in front of her. She felt the determination rush through her like an energy source. Looking at what she had so far, she sat back and had a moment to reflect.

Luke knew nothing of his Irish roots prior to the family he already had in the US, so the first thing Beth had done was look at his grandparents. From there, she was able to trace down the maiden name of his grandmother and made some connections to Dublin. From there, she had found a few more names and locations, all of which she believed would be a good starting point for Luke to explore.

The day dragged by slowly, the grey, looming clouds still towering over the city. As the clock hit 5PM, Luke's office door banged open. He stepped out lifelessly, all energy drained from his face and body. He exhaled heavily as he looked up to the skies. Finally. He was bloody done with the project. A swarm of coworkers burst through the door behind him, all of them looking as tired as he did.

"Luke, how you feeling?" asked one of his coworkers.

"I feel...empty," Luke laughed playfully. "Just glad it's all over."

"You know what? It was a big project. But we were very lucky to get the opportunity to do it. I think we did a great job. A group of us are going to a bar to get a few drinks, do you wanna join us?"

Luke felt his skin crawl. His introverted self couldn't think of anything worse than sitting in a bar, drinking and socializing with others. All he wanted to do was just go home.

"No, thanks. I need to recharge my batteries."

"No worries, pal. See ya soon."

As his coworker walked away, Luke truly realized how empty he felt. He was left a hollow shell of a man, that project had well and truly sucked the life out of him. He felt somewhat hazed, almost as if he was floating on thin air.

He loosened his tie as he stumbled to the nearest bus station, careful not to step in any puddles that had formed during the storm. A long queue had formed at one of the shelters, he exhaled heavily. He caught his reflection in the bus window and slowly raised his brows. He looked like death. He ruffled his hair, trying to make himself seem a little bit more presentable.

Suddenly, he saw a cloudy figure stand behind him in his reflection. He paused for a second, his tiredness causing a delayed reaction. Trying to sharpen his gaze, he noticed the figure looked like a person. He stood there, frozen in fear as he felt a sharp, cold breeze tickle his neck, almost as if someone was breathing down it. Still keeping his eyes on the reflection, he noticed the ghoulish figure slowly reached a hand from behind him and went for his shoulder.

He felt a tap.

Jumping out of his skin, he turned around suddenly, only to be met with young woman who had tapped him on the shoulder.

"Excuse me sir, are you in the line? It's your turn next," she said.

He shot back to his reflection on the bus window, only to notice the white figure had disappeared.

Rubbing his eyes, he thanked the young woman and apologized to those behind him and stepped on board the bus.

He found his gaze searching the bus restlessly to see if there was anyone dressed in white, hoping that his eyes had deceived him. But no. Nothing. Nobody. He rubbed his eyes once more. The project must've sucked the sanity out of him, too. He had well and truly underestimated how tired he was. He took a seat, leaned his head against the window and immediately fell into a deep state of sleep.