

## Welcome to the Neighborhood

"What? What *is* it?" Patrick was unnecessarily sharp because, frankly, it startled him, the scratch-tapping at the front door. It was almost nine o'clock and no one ever knocked, especially at nine, especially on a Thursday, and he was the only one home. He sat at his kitchen table and tried to decide what to do, then felt ridiculous for trying to decide what to do. On his quiet street, very few exciting things ever happened. Even slightly interesting things were rare, depending on who you asked. Patrick folded his newspaper as the knock came again, louder this time, more urgent. "All right," he called, "Okay! I'm coming!"

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The irritable tapping ceased as Patrick tossed open the door and was faced with a long-nosed woman gripping a sealed brown package. "Are you Patrick?" she inquired, peering at him through bifocals. "I dunno," he shrugged. "Depends on why you're here." It took a little bit for the woman to get the joke, and even then, she only smiled thinly. "You are Patrick," she concluded, dismay ripe in her tone. "What's wrong?" "I figured you'd be a little...bigger." Indignant, Patrick straightened. "I'm 5'6!" he retorted. "Nevermind. Why are you here? And what is your name?" She nudged past Patrick, inviting herself inside. The majority of the furniture was delicate, but she seemed to take little notice of anything as she swung her large package down on the glass table adjacent to the one he'd been sitting near. "You called for me," she said simply, adjusting her long skirt so that it didn't quite sweep the floor as much. "I am Ebony," she announced regally. "And you called for me."

*Submitted by: Khadia O.  
Age: 11 // Location: New York, New York  
June 17, 13:31PM*

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Patrick stood uncertainly in the main room, watching the interloper in wide-eyed wonder. "I... called for you?" "Precisely," she answered back in her clipped accent. "May I sit?" Patrick looked about the room, eyes darting from the couch, to the package, to Ebony, and finally to the clock on the mantel. 9:00 still. "Patrick," her voice was a bit more calm but still powerful. Whoever she was, it was clear she was practiced in these types of home invasions, an observation which aided Patrick's confusion, "This is going to sound strange, but you have to promise me you will listen and believe? Will you?" Patrick remained silent for a moment, scanning the eyes of his visitor. Her face was the color of creamy coffee. Her lips were wide and full and set determinedly but also compassionately. And under her bifocals, her eyes were dark and sincere. "Yes," Patrick murmured, not even sure himself where the reply came from. Ebony sighed deeply and took a seat on the couch, patting the seat beside her for Patrick to join. "I am your author, Patrick." She leaned forward to pull the

package from off the table. "And this," she said, stroking the brown envelope lovingly, "this is your story."

*Submitted by: Karis Ford  
Age: 17 // Location: Rockwall, Texas  
June 17, 16:02PM*

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Patrick looked at the envelope, then back at the now quite amusing Ebony sitting on his couch. Then, as if the world had crashed down on him and released itself once more, he laughed. A strong, hearty laugh that only a man of his stature could produce. Ebony didn't find it so amusing, so she delicately lifted the envelope and with one swift smack, slapped it against the table. Patrick stood silent, then after a long pause, he took the envelope in his hand and rolled his fat palm on it's smooth surface. "You... you're serious... ?" he stuttered quietly, still stroking the envelope. It was unusual for Patrick to be uncertain, for he was most always right in his quaint little home on his quiet little street. Ebony replied, "Quite," she pursed her lips for a moment, as if trying to dictate her words. Then she simply said "and you," she took in a sharp and short breath and crisply finished "you are going to read it." After noting her completely serious expression and thinking it over, Patrick gingerly opened up the brown packet and with his right hand, pulled out the first sheet of paper. He read it thoroughly, as if none of his life had been known to him until now. Then, he lifted his head and with a furrowed brow, he recalled every account. They were all *completely* true.

*Submitted by: Gabrielle Guitzkow  
Age: 12 // Location: Waunakee, Wisconsin  
June 18, 13:36PM*

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Patrick lingered only briefly on this, however. Instead, he looked up at Ebony and pressed his next question on her. "If you know all of this, does this mean that you could tell me my future?" Ebony glanced up at him with a sincere stare. "This is your story, Patrick," she repeated. "I can't tell you what will happen." He looked up at her again. "But you are my author. Can you write my future for me?" She stared directly into his eyes. "I can write whatever I want about you. You are my character, my creation. But it will be up to you to tell the rest of your story." With this, she was gone. Patrick stared at the place she had been seconds before, then he returned to the kitchen table. A pad of paper and a pencil he had never seen before had appeared. He picked up the pencil curiously and began to write:

"Patrick longed to see his brother again after not communicating for over three years with him. Even though he knew it was fruitless, he still hoped that one day his brother would come to call on him. Just as he was about to try calling him on the phone one more hopeless time, he heard a knock on the door--"

"This is stupid," Patrick said aloud. "I can't write my own future." Just then, he heard a knock on the door. "Hello? Is any one home?" Patrick's heart skipped a beat. He knew that voice.

*Submitted by: Sydney Huetter  
Age: 13 // Location: Tucson, Arizona  
June 18, 17:34PM*

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Getting up with a slight tremor, Patrick once again opened the door with an exhale, only for the breath to be brought in again by a short gasp. It was his brother, Jeffery, holding a huge duffle bag.

He knew it was Jeffery by the glimmering eyes and taunting smirk he always used to give him as a kid.

"What? No hug?" Jeffery said with the same hearty laugh Patrick had given to Ebony no more than minutes ago. Jeffery embraced his brother and Patrick, dumbfounded, had no choice but to embrace him back.

"Jeff....how..." Patrick let go, taking it all in. "It...it's good to see you."

Jeffery nodded. "Listen, Pat. I need a favor. I'm kinda in a bind and, well-" A look of worry crossed his face as he looked right and left, finally stepping into the house with no invitation, nudging Patrick aside. "I need your help."

Patrick locked the door, feeling a sudden pang of anger. "You want my help after not talking to me for years? Why-"

Just then Jeffery undid the duffle bag, fishing out enough money fit for a king. His gaze crossed over to the pen and pad on the kitchen table. "Write a letter or something?"

*Submitted by: Sarah Lovy  
Age: 16 // Location: Detroit, Michigan  
June 18, 22:36PM*

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Shaking his head, Patrick kept looking back and forth between Jeffery and the amount of money that he had seemingly produced out of nowhere. Patrick stuttered, "Where... where... where did you get all of that?" Jeffery, slightly amused, answered slyly "Just picked it up here and there, don't worry your tiny little head about it." Leaving Patrick standing dumbstruck in the kitchen, Jeffery moved closer to the papers, curious about what Patrick would be writing. Picking up the top most paper, and taking a quick glance, Jeffery asked, "Writing an auto-biography now?" As if the spell and allure of the money disappeared,

Patrick looked away. "Huh?" he said. Noticing what his brother was holding in his hands, he answered "It's a long story, and you probably won't believe me." "Try Me," Was the only response Patrick got from his brother. After spinning the tale about Ebony, exaggerating only here and there, Patrick looked at his brother who was staring at him hard.

*Submitted by: Wen Mai Wong  
Age: 16 // Location: Laveen, Arizona  
June 19, 12:15PM*

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As the silence broke out into a wild fire, Jeffery shook his head and bent down for his duffel bag. "Jeff..." "Ebony, was Jeanette's grandmother. And Jeanette is dead."

*Submitted by: Wynn  
Age: 10 // Location: Cayuga, NY  
June 19, 19:01PM*

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"Wait, slow down! You're losing me by the second," Jeffery yelled at Patrick. "Who is Jeanette? I do not even know enough about Ebony to pinpoint if she even has a mouth." Patrick solemnly replied, "Jeanette was a teen whom lived in this house two years ago. Unfortunately, she simply vanished one day into the mist. No one ever discovered what had become of her."

*Submitted by: George Lu  
Age: 14 // Location: Tallmadge, Ohio  
June 19, 21:55PM*

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"How would you know this?" Jeffrey asked. "I-I don't know. I just....do," Patrick stammered, suddenly unsure of himself. "Oh, so your a psychic now?" Jeffery said sarcastically. "No!" he shouted, suddenly angry. "That pad of paper, the one you thought was an autobiography, I wrote that you knocked!" Jeffery stood shocked, for Patrick hardly ever raised his voice. Patrick continued slowly, seeing the shock in his brothers face. "Thats 'my story'. Apparently it's like my destiny or something." Suddenly, as if struck with a bolt of lightning, Jeffrey sprang up and bolted to the table. He grabbed the delicate papers and ran to the bathroom. Patrick chased after him. "Jeff! stop it! What are you doing?!" The older brother was flushing his Patrick's "destiny" down the toilet. Patrick was seeing red as he grabbed Jeff and flung him down on the bathtub and started hitting him. Between punches, Jeff tried to explain. "No! stop! lease wait! I can explain! I had one too!" Patrick paused. "What did you just say?" he asked, panting through gritted teeth. "I had one too, a 'story'. Some woman with a big nose gave it to me. I wrote myself a duffel full of cash, but apparently it came from a bank robbery. Thats why I need your help."

*Submitted by: Joseph P  
Age: 12 // Location: Houston, TX  
June 20, 11:44AM*

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"You need MY help?" Patrick shouted. His anger was rekindled. "You're the one who was greedy, and wrote yourself a stolen duffel of money? Why are you coming to me?"

Jeffery's eyes widened. "Hold on, now, brother. You're different than I remember you."

Patrick glared. "What do you mean by that?"

"You were, well...listen, Patrick, why don't you just help out? We're brothers. Don't be selfish!"

"How do you expect me to help?" Patrick said, but as much as he tried to make his voice sharp and threatening, his anger was slowly fading. "You want me to break the law?"

Jeffery couldn't seem to hide a smirk. "No, of course not," he reminded Patrick. "We can do anything we want, and just write our way out of it!"

"That's how you got into all this trouble in the first place," Patrick sneered. "It's not that simple. We can't control everything! It's like our words can twist around and stab us in the back. I should know. YOU showed up." After he said that, though, he immediately felt guilty. He trampled his pride with a tight, "sorry."

"We'll be more careful this time," Jeffery tried to reassure Patrick. "I was inexperienced before, but we can be cautious now. Write every single detail so that nothing can slip in through the cracks! Okay?"

Patrick was unsure. "I'll help you, but on one condition. Everything we do, we agree first. No spur-of-the-moment anger stuff."

Jeffery nodded slowly, but Patrick couldn't help looking down at the toilet, where the key to his destiny had vanished.

*Submitted by: Veronica  
Age: 13 // Location: Mechanicsburg, PA  
June 20, 12:52PM*

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" But Jeffery," Patrick said. " How the heck are we going to get the pad back? It's not like we can just jump into the toilet." Jeffery paused at this. "Heh... well, I didn't exactly think of that." "Yeah, that's because you barely think." said Patrick. "What are we going to do?" Jeffery sat down, and stared out the window. "Hey," said Jeffery, "Patrick, check it out." Patrick snapped his neck to Jeffery's direction. "What is it now, Jeffer-", but before he could finish his sentence, his eye's widened at what was on the table. It was the pad. "How did it get there?" He asked Jeffery. " I don't know," said Jeffery. "And now I'm thinking about my pad too." "What did you do to it?" "Well... after I found out about the robbery incident, I threw mine in the trash.. If what I did to yours is the same with mine, it must be on my table too. It must be drawn to the two of us." Patrick's eyes widened. "What should we do with it first?" "I have an idea." smiled Jeffery.

*Submitted by: Peter S  
Age: 13 // Location: New York City, NY  
June 20, 17:25PM*

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"Ok what could it possibly be?" Patrick asked with a sigh. "I tell you on the way to police station." Jeffery said with a wide smirk smacked on his face. "Where?!" Patrick was completely struck by how proud his brother could sound saying something so stupid. "The station" Jeffery repeated still with the smirk of pride. He reached for the pad, but then without thinking Patrick smacked his brother's hand away from the pad and pencil. "Ow" Jeffery's smirk faded and was now pouting and cradling the hand that was struck by his brother. Patrick calmly picked up the pencil and pad. "I finally see you in who knows how many years and you're just going to leave me again?", Patrick mumbled loud enough for the two of them to hear. "What?" Jeffery dropped his stricken hand, "No, what are you drunk?" It was Patrick's turn to get an idea, he left the room quickly. "Hey where are you-" Jeffery started but before he had completed his sentence, his brother returned with some slightly crumpled papers. Patrick started writing fast and mumbling. "Hel-lo?" Jeffery practically sang heading towards his brother by the table, "What are you writing?" Patrick looked up with a decent smile and said, "A better future". Jeffery was surprised, "You haven't even heard my idea yet." He picked up the paper Patrick was brain storming on, read it to himself and smile spread across his face as he looked away from the paper to his brother. "And yet you somehow had the same idea and improved it".

*Submitted by: Sound T.  
Age: 15 // Location: Southern California  
June 20, 18:20PM*

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Seven hours later, the two brothers were riding down an old gravel road in a faded blue pickup truck. Both had various cuts and bruises, Jeff had a sprained ankle, and Patrick had a black eye. "I told you we never should of done this," he said, driving with one hand. "Oh, shut up. we wouldn't be in this situation if you hadn't stole the grapes." his brother angrily retorted. there was awkward silence for a couple minutes. Patrick considered apologizing, but decided not to. as the minutes turned into hours, Jeffery decided to break the silence. "But why did you have to destroy the pads?" Patrick guiltily looked to where his hand and his brothers hand were impossibly fused together. Hours earlier, he wrote the pads to destroy themselves after making sure that he and his brother would never leave one another. The pads then burned to ashes, and blew away in the wind.

*Submitted by: Joseph P  
Age: 12 // Location: Houston, TX  
June 21, 15:12PM*

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"Hey. Jeffery." Patrick hit the brakes, swerving into an old alley. "Let's talk." Jeffery gaped. "Talk? Jesus, Patrick - the cops are chasin' us for the world! Not to mention that if *anyone* sees us we'll be off to, I don't know, Timbuktu! We're a freakshow! Now step on it!"

Patrick sighed a deep sigh, running his not-attached-to-his-brother's-hand hand through his tousled hair. "Jeffery, I just don't care anymore! Yesterday I was sitting at home reading the paper, and now some old lady named Ebony is our destiny godmother just 'cause I live in her dead grandkid's old house! We have - well, had - total control of our destiny, endless wishes and it's ruined us! Look at us! We have *nothing!* Don't hold on to this narrow-minded thing people call reality! The cops are the least of our problems, and from what I hear, Timbuktu is pretty dam\* cool!"

Jeffery dipped his head down. Deep rumbles echoed in his throat. He looked up at the evening sun, and the streams of tears on his cheeks glistened as he laughed hysterically. He pulled something out from beside his seat - the stolen pound of grapes that had caused them to surpass the speed limit in a frenzy of panic. "Here, Pat," he chortled. "The fruit of our labors."

The two brothers, for that's what they were, hooted and popped grapes into their mouths until finally they tired and leaned back in the old truck's interior, gazing at the sky through the mud-splattered windshield.

"We have no hope, Jeff," Patrick rasped, his taste buds sick of the sour grapes which had cost them so much, yet so little.

"None." Jeffery smiled.

The young men with rapidly graying hair laughed weakly and closed their eyes, their swarming thoughts falling from their minds. Meanwhile, a little old lady with a surprisingly sprightly face beamed at them through the dark window before stepping into the shadows of a deserted shack and vanishing into the *ebony night*.

*Submitted by: Niathi K.*

*Age: 12 // Location: Bay Area, CA*

*June 21, 20:22PM*

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"Hello?" Margret, the younger sister of both brothers, questioned as she entered the now empty house, holding her favorite instrument, the violin. Her strawberry blond curls stuck to her head from the sweat that was dripping off her head from the hot afternoon sun, and her green eyes luminated the world around her as she search the empty house, "Patrick?" Her brother had nerver been particually fond of his younger sister,m who at eleven was considered a pest in his eyes, yeet she loved him with her entire being, just like she loved all of her family. She was just annoyign and bothersome, quite often, that nobody really wanted to be around her. "What's this?" She said, finding a pad of paper, the same paper that had been written to be destroyed, sitting, ready to be written in on the kitchen table. "Hmm...I wonder." She said, picking up a pen. It had been a while since her parents had been able to afford writing supplies, so it was an interest to her that she'd have a pad of paper after all that time without one. "Patrick? Are you

here?" She got no response, although she was wondering if it was okay for her to write in. Hearing that he wasn't there, when he was supposed to be there to babysit her, to feed her lunch, made her angry. And full of fury, she scribbled at the peice of paper, tears springing out of her eyes and dripping onto the paper as she wrote.

*Submitted by: Ashley  
Age: 16 // Location: California  
June 22, 14:31PM*

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The note's cotents were dashed with her streaming tears, she wrote, Patrick, I know you have always have thought of me as less than important, more annoying than anything else. I know, that you know, we are family and that I loe you still. Now that I have said all this, I must ask, "How could you do this to me?" I may be annoying and that just may be my falw but it is time that you come to terms with your own. You are a horrible excuse for a brother! And for that, I will frget you in hopes of forgetting the heartache you cause so often these days. So long and goodbye Patrick. I hope you realize what you left behind. Then she picked up her shattered reamins o her heart and walked out into a world she would not soon forget, one without her brother, Patrick.

*Submitted by: Sabrina  
Age: 17 // Location: Massachusettes  
June 22, 15:51PM*

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*Patrick doesn't love me. No one does. Not that I blame them of course. He probably took whatever chance he could to get away from me. He's my favorite brother and I love him so much but he doesn't even care about me. It hurts.*

The pen angrily scrawled into the book, smudging in a few places from Margret's tears. The handwriting was clumsy, as she hadn't held a pen for so long but the words were legible enough. Margret burst into tears again. The violin lay forgotten beside her on the table.

*I wish someone would just kidnap me. Maybe then he'll feel the need to care about me. Yes, I wish someone would come and kidnap me away and Patrick will come to rescue me. Maybe then he'll care. Maybe then he'll love me.*

She dotted the last i and crossed the last t in the sentence before the pen fell to the table with a clatter. The tears gushed down her cheeks and she drew her arms closer around her. "I am all alone," she thought. Immersed in her own tears, she hardly heard the doorbell ring. She hardly heard a scratching on the wooden door. She hardly heard the creak of the wooden door as it opened.

Heavy footsteps padded across the beige carpet behind her. A rough arm

grabbed her and pushed the pad to the floor. Her eyes widened and she didn't even have time to scream because the intruder clapped a hand over her mouth. In moments of panic, Margret had a tendency to black out which is exactly what happened. Her strawberry blond curls brushing the back of her neck and the intruder picking her up were the last things she remembered before all was ebony black around her.

*Submitted by: Aria  
Age: 15 // Location: Texas  
June 22, 16:18PM*

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Margret awoke to a severe aching in her back and a headache unlike anything she had ever experienced. But the real pain was in her heart., she thought bitterly as the past's events caught up with her. She groaned and rolled over to find out that she was lying on a thin, scratchy blanket. She could feel cold cement beneath the holes in the poorly stitched wool. Already, Margret wanted to cry. Already, Margret wanted to give up. "No!" She said aloud, surprising herself. "I'm not doing this. I'm... I'm going to fight my way through this." She brushed the evidence of tears at the corners of her eyelids away. For the first time in her life, Margret wanted more from herself. For the first time in her life, Margret wanted to try.

*Submitted by: Salem  
Age: 16 // Location: California  
June 22, 19:34PM*

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Margret thought about all she had gone through over the course of her life: Patrick continuing to ignore her, just like Jeffrey had before he left, her parents, forcing her to live the life of a musician rather than some one who lead in school or in life. She remember the days when she came home from a bad school day when Patrick would listen to her day for about two minutes before switching on the TV, and she'd end up having her violin sing the sad song that only har heart could play. This is how she would escape her prison, by using what she had (a torn wool blanket, and the thin jacket she had on from her walk home.)

*Submitted by: Tanya B  
Age: 14 // Location: Burrillville, Rhode Island  
June 24, 14:38PM*

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She got up, and brushed herself off. After poking around in the dark she told herself to act as if nothing was wrong and everything would be alright. She started to move around the small room and search all the small cracks and holes

for a clue of where she was. Soon, she found that actually the room wasn't a room at all. It was a basement, not a room, but a basement. "I wonder what could be up there," she thought. She had found the rickety staircase leading up into the darkness. "Oh," she whispered as she realized she did not have her glasses on. Now, she slowly crawled back to her rancid wool blanket to retrieve her glasses, then back to the staircase. Slowly, but steadily, she half walked, half crawled up the staircase to the thin sliver of light peaking out from what she assumed to be the door.

*Submitted by: Phoebe  
Age: 13 // Location: California  
June 24, 20:03PM*

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Suddenly a sigh of relief had come over her. "Could this be what I think it is?" she thought. As she slowly made her way to her escaping point she had a clear view of the light ahead. She had poked her head out of the opening of the basement & was finally able to retrieve light. Once she did she couldn't believe what she was seeing. It had led her to a full-lit hallway with lighting coming out of every direction. Margaret had soon rose to her feet, tip-toeing through the silent hallway. Then just as she was able to find her way to the stairs, she heard voices & footsteps from a room she had stopped next to near by.

*Submitted by: Simone Brooks  
Age: 18 // Location: San Antonio, Texas  
June 25, 18:07PM*

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Patrick walked towards the door, with not the slightest idea of whom might be waiting behind the tall, maple door. The tall teenager with usually untidy blonde hair opened the door slowly with a rather anxious feeling in the pit of his stomach. As the door creaked open, he saw a tall, dark figure standing in his doorway. What he most feared had become true. The tall figure pulled his hood down, and revealed a thin, pale face with that deadly familiar grim expression and those intense green eyes that had crept their ways into Patrick's worst nightmares. "Hello, Patrick. We've been waiting for you.", Nefastar said hungrily with an even scarier smile, followed by a crazed laugh. Patrick put one hand in front of him and blasted a shard of light directly to the necromancer's body. Nefastar screamed with rage, and the teenager ran to the quiet, but eerie streets of his neighborhood, his heart hammering against his chest. He dived and avoided a huge black, shard that hit the pavement instead and turned it to magma. He turned around and saw Nefastar chasing after him, he could see his hungry eyes shining in the moon's light. This couldn't be happening, All these years of hiding, turning away from his own destiny. Knowing that he was not your average teenage kid. Patrick stopped in the middle of the street, opened a portal in the street's pavement that swirled with all the colors, dove into it and transported into nothingness. He should call the others. It was time.

*Submitted by: Rodrigo Pecchio  
Age: 12 // Location: Miami, Florida  
June 26, 13:52PM*

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As she stopped to get a cup of coffee from the nearest starbuck cafe, there he was, with a radiant look on his face and a red rose in his hands waiting for her to notice him.. He stared at her for a long time as she walked in the store, observing her every move like 5 years ago when he first layed his eyes on her for the first time in that same coffee shop. There she was, luminiscent and beautiful as he once remembered her. Her hair falling down on her soft facial features with ease, style and elegance. She finally looked up and became aware of his presence.. how could she not recognize his manly visage?? it was him, him and only him...She stared back at his ocean blue eyes and smiled at him like the first time they met. He told her "you look as stoning and radiant as the first time I saw you on that rainy afternoon, 5 years ago....Please accept this rose as a token of my admiration for your beauty my beautiful princess..." She blushed as she accepted the rose with delicacy and sophistication. Her heart was beating so hard that he could hear it as he finally approached her to kiss her hand. She could not believe that he could be standing in front of him once again.. As they sat at a table to talk he never took his eyes away from her and in his mind he was sure that she was the woman for him and after all this time he was going to ask her to marry him.....

*Submitted by: Mayra Vega  
Age: 35 // Location: Miami, FL  
June 27, 14:54PM*

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As Patrick fell through opening he created, he started to cough. Soon, his heavy coughing became accompanied with wheezing and became worse by the minute. Patrick could feel the air being sucked out of his lungs as he continued his descent down the hole. His eyes became watery and as he fell, it felt like a breif visit from Death. After going through the intense pain, Patrick landed, hard, on stable ground. Around Patrick, there were crumbling pillars and fog on the low floor. A dull light shown from the dark clouds that were forming above him.

"It feels like Im looking for people.", Patrick said to himself. "Oh great I'm talking to myself. It must have been the fight with Nefastar."

He then swiftly sprinted through pillars to find "the others". In the distance, he could see the silhoutte off a man and women on a tiny hill. The light wasn't bright enough to illuminate their faces, so Patrick decided to see who these peculiar people were. While Patrick headed toward them, several flashbacks came at once making it feel as if he had known these people for years. He continued toward them.

*Submitted by: Isaiah S.*

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*Age: 10 // Location: San Bernardino, California  
June 27, 21:07PM*

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Margret froze. She searched frantically for a place to hide, but the harsh, bright light left her no chance of concealment. The voices were louder now, and Margret dashed onto the stairs, wincing as the wood creaked beneath her feet. She curled into a ball and closed her eyes, praying that they would, somehow, bypass the girl huddled on their stairwell. The voices were of two men, one of great wealth, the other in dire need of a bath, and perhaps a bit more money. "Oh, sir, don't worry, please, I assure you that I have everything under control, there is no need for you to go down there, nor call for assistance, it is all fine, I tell you!" the second man pleaded, with an apparent note of desperation in his voice. "Nonsense," argued the other, "I simply must check on that gold. My uncle shall be most displeased if it is misplaced." He had a thick British accent, and a way of speaking that made him seem as if he were above all other issues but those he himself found particularly intriguing. "But sir!" cried the desperate man. All of a sudden, the footsteps stopped- right in front of Margret. The desperate man let out a little squeak of surprise and fear. Margret slowly lifted her head and peered up at the two men. "uh..." she was not sure what to say. The small, skinny man who had seemed rather worried now seemed positively frantic. "A-an outrage!" he stuttered, his face pale with fright. The rich man looked down his large nose at Margret. "Positively foul," he muttered. Suddenly, Margret stood up, outraged. "I am not *foul*." She spat. She had always been particularly sensitive about her appearance, having been teased so many times. However, when Margret glanced down at herself, she did indeed find herself quite disheveled. "I've been through quite a bit it seems, that's all." The rich man barked out orders to have her thrown from the house, and she was dumped into the dark night.

*Submitted by: Ava  
Age: 12 // Location: Princeton, New Jersey  
June 27, 21:15PM*

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The portal locked close behind him. He coughed, tumbling forward. "Watch where you're going!" He glanced up quickly. "Margaret?" "P- Patrick?" Her voice cracked as she stumbled forward into his arms, her head bruised. "Oh, Patrick, you have no idea what I've been-" "Could you- shh." Patrick glanced nervously behind him. Was that a portal opening he had heard? But no- maybe not. "We should get out of here." "Patrick, I was kidnapped." "Let's go." "Patrick!" He turned to see her hunched over, arms clutched to her chest. "Is that really it? After all this time, and you haven't even noticed that I'm hurt-" "Okay, Margaret, look, I'm sorry. It's just that I've been through a lot-" "YOU've been through a lot? I was kidnapped! I wrote on this stupid notepad, and the next thing I knew, here I was!" Patrick gripped her by the shoulders. "Notepad? Where?" "Just this silly piece of paper I found, it was nothing- could you STOP now?" "I- I'm sorry. Are you all right?" Margaret stared down at the grass, and sniffled loudly. "Fine."

"Good." "I'm very glad. Now, I'm sorry to bring it up again, but this is very, very important: where is that notepad now?"

*Submitted by: Leah Rachel  
Age: 17 // Location: Monmouth County, New Jersey  
June 28, 20:40PM*

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"I left it back in the mansion." "YOU LEFT IT BACK IN THE MANSION?!"  
"Yes...is there a problem?" "I have to get that notepad Margaret!" "What's so important about it Patrick?" "What you've writtten determines my future" "Your future, Patrick?" "Yes Margaret, yes. Now all we have to do is get back through that portal." "...about that..heh" "Margaret, if you don't spit it out now, I will.."  
"THE PORTAL CAN'T OPEN AGAIN. IT OPENS ONLY ONCE AND WE'RE STUCK HERE! I'M SORRY PATRICK!," Margaret said, while gripping the bottom of Patrick's pants for her dear life.

*Submitted by: Shari Stiell-Quashie  
Age: 16 // Location: Brooklyn, New York  
June 29, 16:09PM*

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Jefferey laughed as he pulled Patrick's life into impossible turns while filling his mouth with the plump sour grapes. Now he had all the money; and all the grapes. They didn't even have a sister. He gave a loud chuckle. If Patrick had been kind to him those three years while he was away he wouldn't be in some sort of contorted funhouse reality right now. So what if he had been in prison? Patrick could have dropped him a line.

The world before Patrick was dark and nightmarish. There was no light from stars, the stars were replaced by shadows in the sky. Patrick sighed, now he would find out the extent of his freakshow abilities. He struck his finger, which lit like a match, hissing the world to light. He approached the people on the hill.

"Who are you?"

"We are your Editors. This story has gotten quite out of hand." The man said with a small laugh.

"Only you can set this right." The woman said quietly and her face was lit in a becoming light. She handed him his very own pad of paper and a red pen.

He began to write. "Jefferey, if you were going to give us a sister couldn't you have at least spelled her name right?"

Red words suddenly appeared on Jefferey's paper in his brothers handwriting.

Jefferey wrote back, "I'm sorry Pat. How can we fix this?"

Patrick wrote filling the entire page with red ink. Word after word he labored, they interlocked and spiraled through the pages like trapeze artists. Slowly the portal world dissolved and soon he was sitting in his living room with both Margaret and Jefferey by his side holding his own brown cloth book in his arms with new revisions. There was still much to do. Money spilled out of the duffel on the floor. A gaping hole to an alternative world lay opened on their front yard. And no matter how hard he tried, he and Jefferey were inexpicably joined at the hand.

*Submitted by: Rachael  
Age: 16 // Location: Sharpsburg, Georgia  
June 30, 12:37PM*

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"How do we fix this?" Jefferey murmured to himself. Patrick raised his eyebrows as he spun the red pen around through his fingers.

"We? Jefferey, you're the one who wrote up this mess," Patrick pointed out.

Margaret leaned over the both of them as they stared at pages of red ink, the ones that never seemed to disappear, and blushed in embarrassment as she saw her frantic handwriting meshed with her tears.

"Do you think you guys can cross things out?" she asked, "Like erase them in a way?" Jefferey shrugged and placed his pen over a sentence.

"Are you crazy?" Patrick said in disbelief. "This pad," he said holding it up in the air, "is dangerous. Look, why don't we just write: The portal is gone." Jefferey shook his head.

"We can't. This is about our lives. We can't just control things like that."

"Fine. We'll write: Patrick has the power to get rid of the portal by saying: go away. Or something like that. Do you think that would work?" Jeffery shrugged.

"I suppose we could give it a try."

Patrick took a deep breath then wrote down the sentence. He didn't feel any different when he put the period at the end of it.

"Okay, let's go try it," he said and proceeded out of the front door. A black swirling mass twisted before them, silent and taunting. With Margaret and Jefferey close behind him, he whispered the words.

"Be gone."

*Submitted by: Abigail  
Age: 15 // Location: Canton, Michigan  
June 30, 22:59PM*

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The portal spun in a whirlwind of light and color, blinding the three siblings. The sound of bells grew rapidly in their ears until Margaret's eardrums popped and then the portal exploded into a thousand pieces, shattering like a bad-luck mirror.

Everything was quiet. And then the sound rushed in once more. "Put your hands up where we can see them!" There were guns pressed into their backs; Jeffrey put his hands up quickly, and Margaret fell to her knees, a silent tear rolling down her cheek. Patrick turned quickly. "What's the big idea?" A figure leading a pack of men in black stepped forward and shook off her hood. "N- Nefastar?" "The name's Nia. I'm your editor-in-chief, and what you just did? It goes against the rules. I am sick and tired of your story, Patrick. Get up Margaret and Jeffrey, and make sure you have both notepads. It's about time you come with me."

*Submitted by: Emma Leomeo-Rowling  
Age: 17 // Location: Cornelio, Massachussets  
July 1, 0:30AM*

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As Patrick opened the door, he let out a screech. The flowers in his yard were all torn up. He had spent hours planting and watering them for a welcome back gift for his mom. Plus, there was nobody outside. "What was that all about?" Patrick wondered. He started to close the door, but as he was doing that, Patrick saw a little package at the door. Inside was a little raccon. And inside Patrick's head, a light bulb suddenly went off.

*Submitted by: Abby Hayes  
Age: 10 // Location: Albertson, New York  
July 2, 11:06AM*

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Patrick finally understood that it was the litte racon whom had dug up his beautiful flowers. Patrick was no longer angered by the mess the raccon had caused. He tooked the box and placed it underneath his arm and headed for the woods. When he reached the woods he opened the box and set the raccon free. Then Patrick reached into his pocket and found two sheet of pair that was torn from the notepad and he began to write. As he told the racoon, " Another trip wouldn't hurt." so he began to write and the portal once again opened and he couldn't believe his eyes.

*Submitted by: Zhana Gavin  
Age: 17 // Location: Joliet, illinios  
July 2, 18:56PM*

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He got up with fierce stroll towards the door and peeped through the crack. "Who are you?" "Jus open the door to find out!" Patrick opened the door and to his surprise...No one was there! It was only in a matter of time for Patrick to feel a gust of a cool breeze against his radiant skin. There was then a knock at his bedroom then to the bathroom door! "What do you want?" No answer. The sound was beginning to be harmonious. Patrick grabbed a bat, but he came to his senses I can't hit something that I can't see he thought. "Do you remember Anthony?" Anthony was his Patrick's younger brother from Atlanta, Georgia. How

does he know him? Patrick became curious. "What do you want with me?" "I want what you are hiding..." Was the only request this spirit of a voice could call out. The whole light room became dark and filled with so many different vibes. What is going to happen to me? Patrick wondered.

*Submitted by: Aundrea Beasley  
Age: 17 // Location: Paris, TN  
July 3, 23:59PM*

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"It better not be those rotten kids again!" Patrick muttered to himself. The younglings of the community has been haunting his house for some time now. They seemed to have an innocent curiosity with him; a curiosity that irritated him to a point of almost no return. "Even at this time of night!" He said with sarcasm touching the tones of his voice. He finally found himself at the door, his fingers curling around the handle before he pulled it down to reveal the person behind the urgent knocking.

"What do--oh!"

His eyes met a woman with extraordinary emerald eyes, ones that almost glowed at the sight of them. The pallor of her skin only made her eyes glow more efficiently in the late evening scene. Patrick stood in awe as his eyes traced over the delicate curves of her jaw to her neck then back up to her freckled cheeks and darling smile that spread across her thin pink lips. "Hello, Patrick, right?" He giggled, barely being able to speak before he caught himself. "Uh, yes. I am Patrick." He felt embarrassed for almost screaming at the woman.

"Patrick Smith, am I correct?" She asked again,, readjusting the purse on her shoulder, looking a little anxious now.

"Yes, that is my name. Is there anything I can help you with?"

She tilted her head slightly as she lifted her cool fingers to touch his chin. "Yes, a very urgent matter." She smiled and looked behind him, noticing the mess of his house.

"I am sorry. I was not prepared for company--"

"That won't matter much longer, dear Patrick." She stepped inside, brushing past him as she retreated her hand from his chin as she did so.

"What do you mean?" He asked, wondering why the woman was acting so charming then suddenly so choppy. The woman was probably here to tell him some bad new that he did not want to hear. It always happened that way.

"It's time to fly again." She chuckled again, the laughter memorizing.

*Submitted by: Jaquelyn Driscoll  
Age: 17 // Location: Joshua, TX  
July 5, 12:00PM*

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"What?" Patrick replied, his eyes narrowing. "It's time to fly again," the strange woman repeated. As Patrick stared at her with a blank, confused face, the

woman threw her head backwards and let out a laugh, her emerald green twinkling. "Listen, Patrick. We need to have a talk," the woman said, the tone of her voice suddenly changing. It was stern and demanding, unlike the jolly, merry voice she'd had seconds ago. She closed the door behind her and took a seat on a battered chair that moaned as she sat on it. Before Patrick could react to her actions, the woman clicked her fingers, and... well, morphed. The charming, stunning woman that had been present seconds ago transformed into a smaller, more petite figure. Her tall, slender form shrunk, revealing what appeared to be a shriveled up old woman, whose back and spine slowly shrunk, whose face collapsed into long, tired-looking wrinkles, whose smooth neck suddenly sagged, whose hands became bony and freckled with brown spots... Patrick let out a scream as he contemplated the inexplicable transformation of a young, beautiful woman who could practically be a supermodel into an old, petite woman who looked to be well into her eighties. But before he could speak, the old woman silenced him, her emerald green eyes baring into Patrick's dark, brown eyes, and spoke, her voice reminiscent of the sound of sandpaper rubbing against a blackboard, saying the haunting words, "Patrick? I'm Ebony... Remember me?"

*Submitted by: Hajira  
Age: 12 // Location: Chicago, IL  
July 7, 17:36PM*

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Patrick shook his head in disbelief..."You?! You again?!"

*Submitted by: Danielle Jasmin Garcia  
Age: 17 // Location: New York  
July 7, 18:13PM*

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"Yes, me again," said Ebony. She chuckled and continued, "You always were a bit overdramatic. After all, it's how I made you."  
Patrick said nothing. Ever since the woman had come to his doorstep, his life had been going up in flames, and when he thought things were about to be all right again, when he thought he just *might* have things under control, fate comes along to kick him in the ass.  
"Please, may I come in?" asked Ebony.  
"No!" said Patrick, "Ever since you came here, my life has been falling to pieces! My brother's wanted by the cops--*my sister got kidnapped*--and you want to come in, like everything's okay, and now there're freaks showing up all around me, saying they're my editors, and *you*, twisting everything around because apparently, you're my 'author'?! Whatever you think you're doing, just stop! End it right now!"  
Ebony said fiercely, "I cannot stop it. What is created cannot be destroyed. I created you. If I even attempted to sever the connection between us, you would be *dead*, and my Jeannette would be lost forever..." Her eyes were cast toward the welcome mat in front of Patrick's house. She might have had tears in her

eyes, but Patrick told himself that it was just a trick of the light.

All Patrick said was, "Oh."

During the momentary silence, the old woman pushed her way in. "I think I'd like some tea now," she said. "It's still in the lower cupboard, correct? Oh, yes, I remember, I wrote that it was there, and the sugar cubes too."

Patrick, indignant that he had been tricked, was about to say some snide comment before he caught himself. He needed her, after all, to sort out the mess she had made of his life.

By the time Ebony had finished her tea, they were in the den. The old crone was explaining exactly how and why Patrick was, well, Patrick.

"You see," said Ebony, "When Jeanette had first gone missing, we were in the library of Alexandria..."

*Submitted by: Anonymous*

*Age: 16 // Location: NJ*

*July 7, 21:06PM*

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"Alexandria?" he asked, brows furrowing. A world weary sigh escaped the old woman's lips, and she ran her thin fingers through her dark hair. "Yes, Alexandria," she replied, settling herself in the plush embrace of an armchair. She seemed smaller now, less threatening now that she was settled here. It was as though the fight had left her, only remaining in her quick, dark eyes that caught Patrick's own. "We were researching the pyramids for another story of mine..." He graced her with a look of disgust, lips curling distastefully. "You've written other stories?" Patrick had taken his place on the love seat, feet curled beneath him. His posture was tensed, wary, and he kept his body angled towards the door. Being trapped here by this old woman wasn't on his list of things to do today. "Yes... I am an author. What am I to do but write?" she intoned. He fiddled with a loose thread on the couch beside him, averting his gaze from her own. Patrick didn't want her to read the repulsion written there, the shock. How many other couches had she sat on? How many other people's lives had she ruined, just as she was ruining his own?

*Submitted by: Kat*

*Age: 16 // Location: Florida*

*July 7, 22:01PM*

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"Stop it."

Startled, Patrick jerked his head up with an aching shock, stunned by the sudden ice in Ebony's voice. The amused tone of the old woman sitting next to him had, so quickly, morphed into a sharp ringing that seemed to slap at his face.

"Wha-what?" Patrick asked, slightly defensively, unnerved by the strange display that had just occurred.

"I know. I know what you're thinking," Ebony said, shaking the words from her

mouth as if the very sounds were thinly stretched, just barely holding her together-- but why?

Pausing even as his mouth opened to speak, Patrick looked at her shadowed face, and shook. Lines of age scraped into her sagging face-- normal, and yet strange in that they cut startlingly deeply around her eyes and mouth, as if she had once struggled so badly to speak, and to see, that when she had those memories had pulled at her heart so terribly she had closed her eyes and dropped her mouth until the pull at her skin had begun to draw lines so dark.

Not just lines of age, Patrick realized-- lines of memories, of horrors unforgotten and yet shied away from for so long. Closing his mouth, he opened it again.

"I... I don't get it. I know you're a writer, but why? Why do you insist on creating all these lives and hearts and minds? Doesn't it ever hurt you, knowing that what you create isn't just a factor in your own life like everything else you do, but something completely different? These stories aren't just yours, anymore, you know. They're the lives of other peoples. You have no right!" Patrick asked, carefully at first, and yet quickly raising his voice in undeniable indignation.

"It's not easy, you know!" She yelled, shocking Patrick into a stumble that nearly threw him off the couch. "I know, I know, I know-- don't I know enough, the risks of writing! Of creating!" Her eyes, so hollow, shone with the painful burn of dying embers, seeming to bare down upon his stunned face.

*Submitted by: J.C.  
Age: 16 // Location: NJ  
July 9, 0:48AM*

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"I'm sorry... I never knew..." Patrick whispered. Ebony continued to stare at him, as if trying to figure out who he really was. Patrick, on the other hand, was in a daze. He had never seen this side of Ebony before. After a long, painful silence, Patrick cleared his throat, and spoke. "So... um, why are you here?" Ebony blinked, looking like she had awoken from a long, deep sleep. "Oh, yes, of course. I came here to fix things. Patrick, I... I... I'm sorry. I'm sorry for ruining your life like this. But I'm here to fix things. Here," the old woman said, handing Patrick a thick mass of battered-looking pages. Untidy writing covered the front of the pad, making it look like the writer was in a rush and didn't bother about neat handwriting. With a trembling hand, Patrick gingerly took the pad. He stared at the words, and a flash of memories flooded his brain like a huge, massive wave. He gasped as he realized what this clutter of pages really was, and his eyes widened. "My pad!" he whispered softly, as if a voice any louder would take the pad away from him. Ebony merely smiled. "Yes, Patrick, your pad. Patrick, this is your one and only chance to set things right. I'm sorry for ruining your life like this. I've decided to step away, and cease my control over you. I'm giving you the chance to go all the way back to that Thursday morning, so you'll know now to write down on that pad, so all the tragedy that happened would cease in it's existence. So that your brother would still be mad at you, so that you would live the way you always lived before all this happened. So that your former life would

continue the way it always was." POOF! A puff of smoke, a cloud of dust, and Ebony was gone, leaving Patrick alone, the wistling of the fast wind outside and the eerie, mysterious moonlight flooding his house his only companions.

*Submitted by: Rita  
Age: 12 // Location: Orlando, FL  
July 9, 18:10PM*

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"What? What *is* it?" Patrick found himself saying. Someone was scratching-no, tapping at the door. It was Thursday morning, and his newspaper was simply too interesting to put down.

He walked to his front door, annoyed at having to get up.

He swung the door open, ready to give a long and slightly pompous speech to those bratty little street kids who surely must be the only people stupid enough to bother him during his morning coffee-but then he gasped, startled.

"You!" he said.

It was Ebony.

He had almost forgotten her, as if he could have lived his mediocre, mundane, and *safelife* as he normally did, without ever thinking about the nightmare she had put him through. But here she was. And here he was remembering all of it.

"You!" he said. "You! You! You!" The word seemed to be all he could bring himself to say. He was in utter shock. "You! You, y-you..." he sputtered.

"Hello again, Patrick," said the crone.

Finally he managed a whole sentence. "You promised!"

"I did, and that's why I'm h-"

"No!" Patrick interrupted. "No! You said I could live my normal life! Why are you still here? Why can I still remember you?!"

"Because, Patrick, I came on my own. I need your help-I know I have no right to ask you this, after all I've done, but you're the only one who can help me, who can help Jeanette. I created you that way-if you won't do it for me, as a son would for his mother, do it for Jeanette. You're the only person in the world who can find her, and she-we-need your help. Please." Her eyes, a pure, deep green, worn by crow's feet and sorrow, pleaded with him.

He didn't know what to say, what to do. It was so much responsibility and so heavy a burden that he wasn't sure if he even had the ability, the courage to do it...yet on the other hand, an innocent child--his niece, in a way-had been missing for two years. She could be dead, or worse.

"I'll do it."

*Submitted by: S.J.  
Age: 16 // Location: NJ  
July 9, 21:06PM*

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Judy stood anxiously staring down upon the shoe box as if it were something she has been waiting for her whole life, after beening hit cruel like by her

stepfather. There in that shoe box was something about her mother who has passed away when on September 2nd for there she was no more. Since her mother didn't leave a will everything was left her her sick and cruel stepfather, George. After Judy's mother passed away her stepfather just laughed at her in her own dismay and said to her his rules. "Rule number 1" George said following Judy's eyes as if she were trying to keep something from himself. "You better listen or you know what's coming to ya!" He said shoutingly

*Submitted by: Kylie Anderson  
Age: 11 // Location: Helena, Montana  
July 11, 19:59PM*

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It was the voice of Mel Gibson. He knew that voice anywhere, having seen Braveheart many times, often back to back. Something was different about him though that Patrick couldn't quite put his finger on. "Hello, Mr. Gibson" Patrick said in an unsteady voice. "Hello Patrick" Mel Gibson said, walking in. Patrick tried to say something until he saw a solitary tear running down Mel Gibson's cheek. "Patrick, I know I have a lot of nerve. It seems like yesterday that I could pull my own weight. Back in those good old days when feature films didn't need plot. What I have come to ask you is, would you be willing to invest in my most recent business venture?" Patrick stammered. "Mr Gibson, I just...I just don't know" "I can guarantee you double, triple, hell, even quadruple the amount of money you invest. I just need some cash to get the ball rolling." Patrick continued stammering, which Mel Gibson observed. "I don't think so, Mr. Gibson. I don't even have that much money. I think it's only like..." Patrick pulled out his wallet and looked into it. Twenty dollars sat inside of it "...five dollars" With the ferocity of a lion, Mel Gibson grabbed Patrick by the shirt collar and screamed "I JUST NEED TO GET THE BALL ROLLING, PUNK. WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT BUSINESS? HUH? WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT BUSINESS?" A sudden moment of silence followed, and Mel Gibson began to cry. Patrick felt his throat and coughed. In Mel Gibson's sobs, he could hear something about...

*Submitted by: Luke Tenhage  
Age: 16 // Location: Hamilton, Ontario  
July 11, 20:37PM*

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Editors. "What? Editors?" Patrick wasn't sure Mel Gibson could possibly know about them too. "You wouldn't understand." Mel sniffled.

*Submitted by: Lauren  
Age: 16 // Location: Chicago  
July 13, 19:26PM*

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Patrick laughed a cold, sarcastic laugh. "Ha, with all this crap going on, I'm not sure what to believe in anymore, must less trust anyone anymore. I guess one

more thing won't make a difference, so spit it out." Mel stopped sniffing, and stood up. He gestured to Patrick for both of them to sit down as he wiped his teary face. It was then when he cleared his throat and spoke.

"In high school, when I was still young and naïve, I started dating your mother."

Patrick sat up, as if something had slapped him in the face. Mel Gibson...dating his mother? Jeanette? That's just ridiculous. How am I suppose to believe...I can't believe he actually... The flashes of anger came back, but Patrick restrained himself to stay seated. He clenched his fists under the table and nodded for Mel to continue.

"Your mother, Jeanette, she was the best thing that was ever mine. I loved her so much. She was beautiful, caring, and had that amazing ability of making any situation brighter. I, in comparison, was the opposite, and as we were in this relationship, I constantly thought that I never deserved her."

Patrick had been only four when his mother had disappeared, and didn't have many memories of her. He had seen pictures of her, in the albums and scrapbooks, but that was only the outside; he never remembered what Jeanette had been like. How she talked, how she laughed. Even the foods and TV shows that she loved and hated. He barely knew his mother, yet what was this feeling? It felt...empty, as if he was being swallowed up.

*Submitted by: Connie  
Age: 13 // Location: Bay Area, CA  
July 15, 22:37PM*

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Patrick shifted in his chair uncomfortably, swallowing the big heap of emptiness building within his throat. Slowly he inhaled, and closed his eyes to block out Mel. He needed to remember, needed too. But all that was left was the crumbling pieces of leftover scraps from his distant child hood. A birthday party? A tuck me in at night? Was she ever there, just once? For that moment he became the lost forgotten child with the disheveled hair, and lost eyes. His eyelids flipped open, and he found Mel staring at him intently, and Patrick realized that he had already stopped."I apologize, please continue."Mel's eyes flickered with a smudge of confusion, but he continued with his story."One night Jeanette told me she wanted to get married, I loved her very much however I thought it was too soon. I had my own plans, and a life ahead of me. We got into a fight, and she rambled on about how i didn't care about her. She just bolted off, and i told her not to go, it was dark it was--"He stopped talking and started sniffing in between broken sobs. Patrick gaped at him with surprise. He was... actually being sincere wasn't he? Confusion played its nasty game again and swarmed throughout his head. He then again looked up at Mel, to only see his big, abandoned eyes that for a split second, reminded patrick of himself. He couldn't believe him though, or trust him."How am i really supposed to believe it wasn't you who maybe killed her?"He

said, his voice trembling with rage. "I would never--!" "Really?" Patrick responded sarcastically, his eyes glowing with menace. But Patrick knew Mel just had the same intentions. He just wanted to know what happened to her. Patrick scratched his head, and turned the other direction. Tears welled up fresh inside his eyes, and he blinked to send them backward. If only I knew, If only I knew, Goddammit.

*Submitted by: Kyna Smith  
Age: 13 // Location: wilmington, DE  
July 16, 23:14PM*

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"Okay, Mel Gibson, get out of here. I'm really busy looking for Jeanette - who, by the way, isn't my mom, she just used to live here - so that she can be reunited with her mother Ebony," Patrick explained "And no, you can't help me." He found it in the far corner of his sock drawer. The sight of the worn and wrinkled pages reminded him of all the terrors he faced when he last wrote in it. He reminded himself, With that he scrawled 'Jeanette arrived at the front door of what used to be her house, she was perfectly unharmed, perfectly kind, and in no trouble. Patrick was fine as well.' Setting down his pen, he heard the doorbell. Jeanette was back.

*Submitted by: Meghan  
Age: 13 // Location: St. Paul, MN  
July 17, 16:50PM*

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Frustrated and angry, he opened the door. She came inside and sat on the couch staring at him with a worried look. As he stared at her, his frustrations seem to disappear. As they stared at each other for a few minutes, she finally opened her mouth and said, "do you believe the stories now?" His eyes became teary and he broke down and started crying. "WHEN I WAS FOUR, WHY DID YOU HAVE TO LEAVE ME? WHAT.. I WAN'T GOOD ENOUGH TO BE YOUR SON? ALL MY LIFE I HAVE BEEN SEARCHING THINKING THAT I WAS ALONE. YOU KNOW HOW BADLY IT FEELS? Her eyes became teary and she said, "it was just so hard for me because I fell in love and got pregnant. I didn't regret giving birth to you and believe me that was the best thing that had ever happened to me. I just thought I couldn't take that kind of responsibility because I was alone and your father left me. I didn't want you growing up knowing that you didn't have a father to look up to. So I came into a conclusion where I wanted none of us to exist. Your brother left because he knew what was happening and he didn't want you to go through the pain that he went through. I'm very sorry." At the back of his mind, he was thinking, "is this reality or just a dream? Is this really my birth mother talking to me right now? I have waited so long and why all of a sudden, she shows up?" He shook his head and focused on his mother again. Her face was pale after so much tears had been streaming down her face. He took her hand and put it on his face. "I am just so happy to see you today," She

smiled and gave him a hug. They held on each other so long that he began to weep again. He thought to himself, "I feel that something else is missing. Why have she decided to come back to me after all these years?"

*Submitted by: Savit  
Age: 17 // Location: Philadelphia, PA  
July 20, 20:43PM*

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Wait a minute, Patrick thought. What just happened?  
This teenage girl hugging him right now was his birth mother? And why was he *crying*?  
Immediately, he backed away, with his arms forward as if to ward her away.  
"What's happening?!" he said.  
Jeanette, surprised at his sudden of mood, stared at him.  
"I don't know what you're talking about. Patrick, sweetie, what's wrong?"  
"Don't call me sweetie! I wrote that you came back! This is a trick, isn't it! You, you and Mel Gibson..." He broke off, muttering to himself.  
"Patrick," said Jeanette sternly, "What on earth are you ranting about? What do you mean, you "wrote" that I came back?"  
"No! No, don't you dare try to trick me...either I'm going insane, or you are SERIOUSLY out of your mind. You can't be my mother. You're only *eighteen* and I'm a grown man! Don't you remember anything? Ebony, your grandmother, said you went missing two years ago."

*Submitted by: Anonymous  
Age: 17 // Location: NJ  
July 20, 22:44PM*

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Was I becoming insane? Had my deluded confusions manifested into a dark twisted insanity that now i couldn't crawl out of? All these things were swirling around me like broken memories in a tornado of chaotic disaster and I was just a helpless victim waiting for air support, waving my arms around like a moron.  
"Two years ago, Jeanette! That is if your name is really Jeanette..." his mind was a hurricane of thought and feeling, he needed a painkiller for this migraine like people in Hell needed ice water. "Well some people call me Jeanie, but I'm just trying to be formal Pat." "Pat? Did you just call me Pat?" "Patrick stop, listen to me, everything will be fine, just listen to me for a minute, please?" "No! I'm done with this! Some strange girl can't waltz into my life just expecting to cause chaos in it and want me to listen to some sob story why you humiliate and manipulate me! I'm done, go, get out. Now." His voice was a meer whisper now, overcome by depressing emotions creeping into the safe havens of his mind. He was going to lay down and sleep and wake up and everything would be better. "Fine."  
Jeanette left without another word. I fell onto the couch and cried like a child, like a toddler wanting his mother's warmth and affection, then I surrendered to sleep and then dreams - or nightmares- that would follow.

*Submitted by: Austin Hammond  
Age: 16 // Location: Lake Dallas, TX  
July 21, 19:00PM*

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Patrick inhaled deeply as he reached for the door, ready to spring at any moment.

"what the?" He yelled as he was pushed back into his house by some girl dressed in freaky ninja gear. The girl was on him, pinning him down to the ground while she kicked the door closed.

He stopped struggling as he realized how shockingly close her face was to his. Her blond-ish bangs lightly touched his forehead, her stark grey eyes searched his. Then as if she had found what she was looking for, she got off him and dusted her black ninja garb.

"who are you? What do you think you're doing, barging into my house like that?"

"sorry about that, but you were taking too long. Any second longer and I would have been toast." she pushed past him and into the kitchen.

"Well, hey! where do you think you're going?" Patrick could not believe the nerve of this ninja goddess warrior.

"man you've got nothing in this fridge!" She said as she threw back empty food containers.

Patrick had had enough. He grabbed her arm. "hey I'm talking to you"

He awoke ten minutes later staring up at a ninja girl eating cereal.

"now you know. don't grab me unless you want to end in fetal position."

"who are you? what do you want? and why are you eating my cereal?" She laughed as she finished the bowl, practically licking it clean.

"Patrick, I'm only gonna tell you two things. Once I'm done telling you, you must A. do exactly as I say and B. find me some more cereal."

"one, my name is Elizabeth. Not Liz, not Lizzie, not Beth. Get it right or face the consequences. "

She attacked his pantry once again. "and two, I'm being chased by very, very bad men who want me and the people like me to go to very bad places. It just so happens that you are unfortunately a part of the 'people like me group'. Now where is my cereal?"

*Submitted by: jasmine g  
Age: 17 // Location: montebello california  
July 22, 18:34PM*

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"Cereal?!" Patrick yelled imploringly. "Cereal! You're being chased by your arch enemies and all you can think of is cereal!" "Careful... and those are far from my arch enemies. ""AGGGGH!" Patrick yelled.

*Submitted by: Lily*

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*Age: 13 // Location: United States  
July 23, 11:47AM*

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"Cereal powers me up!" replied Elizabeth coolly. Patrick glared at Elizabeth while pulling the cereal box out of the cupboard. Elizabeth opened the refrigerator and pulled out the milk, a cake, pie, and 3 gallons of ice cream. She added the milk into the cereal and then poured milk into a cup separately. Patrick watched, dazed as she gobbled everything up. Boy! was she an eater! Patrick didn't even eat that much! After she finished all the stuff, she announced, "I'm still hungry." "What!" Patrick shouted. Elizabeth ignored him and made herself 3 peanut butter, butter, and jelly sandwiches. She finished them and got out 3 more gallons of ice cream. She finished that and was still hungry. "Please stop eating!" wailed Patrick while on his knees after Elizabeth cleared everything from the pantry, cupboard, and refrigerator.

*Submitted by: Jessica  
Age: 11 // Location: United States  
July 26, 16:29PM*

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Being in his house again was starting to feel worse than being outside. Patrick sighed.

"I can't stop, once I begin." Elizabeth smirked and wiped her ice cream-adorned mouth. "Now then, back to the main subject." She looked at Jeanette.

"Nefastar has sent me to take your mom back to The Place. She laughed lightly and stuck another spoon of Chocolate Fudge Ripple into her mouth.

"The place?!" Patrick wailed. "What place?"

"The Place, of course. Where we test our Ninja Enemies." Elizabeth rolled her eyes.

"Jeanie is a ninja?" Patrick fell back on the chair.

"Yes, I am." Jeanette spoke softly from the shadows.

"Ah, there you are." Elizabeth threw the ice cream, peanut butter, jelly, and everything else into the fridge. She slammed the door shut, and put on some red lipstick.

"Gosh, does it feel good to moisturize!" She smacked her lips and threw the lipstick on the floor. Then, in one single motion, she grabbed Jeanette and started dragging her across the floor.

"Can you hold the door for me?" She asked.

*Submitted by: Shira  
Age: 12 // Location: Philadelphia, PA  
July 26, 17:57PM*

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"I'm hungry. Not even I can survive food for that long... I mean, I *am* technically immortal but I'm still human, ya'know?" The ninja girl stated this matter-of-factly and was about to shove a handful of oats into her mouth when her hand was grabbed. She looked up and smirked.

"Still haven't learned from your mistake, eh? Be patient kid, you can get even with me when I finish eating."

"I don't fight girls," Patrick replied, but let go of her hand.

"I just want an explanation...about everything...anything...I want someone to tell me what's going on."

"Well Patrick, as I told you before before you were knocked unconscious, I'm being chased by wackos and--

"How do you know my name?"

"Everyone knows your name, duh. Son of Jeanette right? Too bad she died though~"

Patrick gritted his teeth, the anger returning in a flash. "She..she didn't die, I saw her with my own eyes yesterday!"

He lunged for her, but the ninja girl was quicker. In a flash she had paralyzed his body, the cereal spoon transporting from the bowl to pressing into his neck. The edge cut into the skin, a trickle of blood quickly forming. Patrick could feel the icy breath of the ninja girl as she huskily spoke.

"Your mom? You've got to be kidding me. She's fake. " She loosened her grip, letting Patrick drop on his knees and pant to catch his breath. "Watch."

She closed her eyes, Patrick's widening. In a mere instant, her blonde locks darkened to brunette, figure lengthening, the ninja gear replaced with a shimmering green dress. The ninja girl opened her eyes, no longer the dull gray irises, but crystal clear sky blue.

"It's a simple shape-shifting spell. Any low level wimp could perform it."

*Submitted by: Connie  
Age: 13 // Location: Bay Area, California  
July 26, 21:55PM*

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"Okay..."Patrick hesitated. Then he pulled out his wand. "Avada Kedavra!" He yelled loudly. Then he smiled. His dark eyes were brighter than normal, and he felt relieved. Maybe now his life could be normal...

*Submitted by: Ivy  
Age: 13 // Location: USA  
July 27, 14:50PM*

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And then, it all happened at once...

*Submitted by: Ashley  
Age: 13 // Location: El Paso, TX  
July 27, 17:13PM*

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Patrick had felt that he had done something wrong. His eyes darted from his wand that he held in his hand, to the girl who had transformed in front of him. Before him, laying on the ground, was the girl. Patrick suddenly felt a terror far beyond reason clutching his heart. "Hello?" He hesitantly called out to the girl. No response. "Are...are you alright?" Again, no answer. Patrick slowly made his way to the girl, and gasped. Her eyes, wide and bright, were now the color of stone, dull, gray, and lifeless. "What have I done?" Exclaimed a horrified Patrick. "What do I do? I didn't mean to kill her, what do I do?!" He screams into the vast open space which was his kitchen. "I thought she was immortal, she said so herself!" Patrick said, with a voice dripping of remorse. "Well, you thought wrong." Said a voice woven in the darkness. Patrick, already frightened, turned to the source of the voice and gasped, not believing what he saw.

*Submitted by: Daniel  
Age: 14 // Location: Medford, Oregon  
July 28, 13:55PM*

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He saw an old, withered woman, in a dark cloak. Her eyes blazed and she looked incredibly angry. "You killed her," She continued, and then turned to face the lifeless ninja on the floor. She inhaled deeply and exhaled, as if trying to stay calm. "And for that you will pay." She knelt down then, next to Elizabeth, and a single tear made its way through the crevices on her cheek. "You killed my

daughter."

"What? That makes no sense." Patrick shook his head. "You're like, old."

*Submitted by: Kennedy  
Age: 11 // Location: New Jersey, USA  
July 28, 17:32PM*

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"Old. Yes...I guess I am old. But don't you think she was a little too young to die?" said the woman in a bitter, cruel tone. "I didn't mean to! I didn't know what I was doing and it...it...it just happened," said Patrick grabbing his hair and looking for all the world like he wanted to jump off the nearest bridge. "Your intentions stop mattering the moment you hurt someone, Patrick!" yelled the old woman. Suddenly, when she turned back around, her wrinkles were practically gone and her bright eyes were wet with tears. "You're...all young again," Patrick said in awe. "Mmm...my tears are the key to eternal youth and I have not cried in ninety years. I do not want to cry anymore...I don't want to live forever! Can't you see you what you have done to my daughter? See what you have done?" screamed the newly young woman before him with the sound of panic and terror in her voice. "I'm sorry. I'm so sorry...if I could do something I would! And I ju—," "There is something you can do. Find someone...someone who is aching so deeply in their heart that hope is almost gone. Help that person and I will grant you forgiveness...if not, you will have to live forever. And, believe me, forever is too long. Far too long."

*Submitted by: Carolina  
Age: 16 // Location: California  
July 29, 3:22AM*

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Patrick stood, suddenly struck silent, and attempted a swallow. His worries felt caught in his dry throat, his muscles, locked in his shocked stance. For a moment, neither of them dared to breathe. The woman, who was now a mere adolescent girl, lifted her cloaked arm to her eyes, flinging away her tears. "Oh, Elizabeth..." whispered the girl, trailing her fingers lightly along the fallen's cheekbone. "I didn't know..." Patrick croaked. "I didn't want to--" "Don't you dare make excuses!" hissed the girl, springing across the room. Her fingers, thin ribbons of ivory, wrapped around Patrick's neck. The pain he felt was not an ache from the pressure of her hands, nor was it the confused fear that accompanies a lack of breath. No, it was nothing as merciful as that. As her skin contacted his, it seemed to burn, to sear, to scald. Patrick did not dare to scream. "You have sixty-three days," the girl told him. "Over the aeons, I have found that I am very impatient." With those words, she disappeared into the shadows from which she came.

*Submitted by: Alayah  
Age: 16 // Location: Houston, TX*

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July 29, 12:50PM

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And so Patrick was left alone to deal with the burning pain in his neck and chest. He backed away from the body on the floor and slid down to the ground leaning against the cold hard wall. He had sixty-three days. As he looked at the body of the girl who had been alive just minutes before, he suddenly realized that she had been slowly fading. Now she was so transparent that he could see through her to the wall on the other side of the room. He stood up and ran out of the room, not being able to bear the sight of her disappearing any longer. "Well, I'm not gonna get anything done standing around here...who am I trying to kid? I have no idea where to start at all!" Patrick yelled into the empty living room. He knew he couldn't stay around town, though. He couldn't face anyone knowing what he had done and the burden that was now weighing down on his shoulders. He stopped and considered the journey he had to complete now, so he ran up to his room and packed into his duffel bag as much as it could hold.

*Submitted by: Carolina  
Age: 16 // Location: California  
July 29, 17:26PM*

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Patrick stepped towards the door and in one angry movement he wrenched his arm at the doorknob, ready to pull it open and give whoever disturbed his peace a piece of his mind. He became precarious as his fingertips approached the doorknob, suddenly aware that the door was shaking violently and that the mahogany surface of the door was now glowing a furious shade of yellow. He stepped forward and peered into the peephole, and brought his head back, horrified. It appeared that a swirling black hole awaited him. He ran as far away from the door as possible, his instincts telling him to *get out*. As if the black hole was suddenly aware of his running away, it sucked more furiously and soon the foundation of the house was being sucked apart. He ran upstairs, and soon the stairs were being blown into evanescence. He went up into the attic and the hole was starting to catch up on him. He went into the attic, and he lodged himself in there, knowing he had only moments. His eyes darted furiously around the room, and he saw that there was no possible route for escape. Before he could mutter a silent prayer to himself, the brown package the woman had given him began shaking violently in his pocket. He took it out and noticed it was glowing an iridescent purple. He opened it quickly and in it was a small silver key.

Desperate, he pulled down his shirt sleeve and pressed the silver key against his strange, keyhole birthmark, which he had had since birth. As he pressed the key against his skin, it began to burn white hot. He screamed in agony.

As the door whipped open, the black hole appeared and started to glow a fiery red. Patrick's body began to whip around wildly from the pain, and soon, Patrick seemed to be frozen in time.

Patrick heard that in the moments before a car crash, you saw your life flash before your eyes, but he thought he was hallucinating as a strange purple shadow erupted from his body and caused him to collapse on the floor. The shadow began to convulse.

*Submitted by: Jason  
Age: 13 // Location: NY  
July 29, 19:11PM*

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The shadow grew bigger and bigger. Soon, it morphed into the figure of a man, then solidified *into* one. He looked at the approaching hole then gasped. "Novas," he whispered. He grabbed Patrick's arm and then whispered a strange chant that Patrick did not recognize. Soon, they were caught in one strange, sudden, bright light.

*Submitted by: Jason  
Age: 13 // Location: NY  
July 29, 19:14PM*

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Patrick felt his head aching intensely and his body was sore; he felt as if he ran a marathon in the middle of the Mojave desert and now he was paying the price. As he began to slowly open his eyelids he recalled memories of the terror and panic that had encased his mind as he ran away from what seemed to be a black hole. And then a man and a bright white light. "Don't move, kid. You're a newbie...I wouldn't move if I were you." The voice that spoke sounded far away and as Patrick tried to pull himself into a sitting position, an agonizing ache unlike any pain he had ever felt started to spread along his chest. He bellowed in utter agony. "I told you not to move!" yelled the man's voice and Patrick decided he would be completely obedient to this stranger's voice if it could prevent any more pain like that. Little did he know that this man was an expert at causing it. You see, this man was not good yet he was not evil. He was caught somewhere in between...like humans. Only he wasn't human.

*Submitted by: Carolina Ibarra  
Age: 16 // Location: California  
July 30, 1:09AM*

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The man came stand before Patrick, and had to be at least seven feet tall. He was tan with dark curls of black hair. He looked as though he could crush a car, his muscles being well-defined. His eyes were an icy blue, but filled with warmth and kindness. Patrick's eyes grew wide. A closer look revealed a long, black tail. The man wore a simple black t-shirt and black jeans. He also had a pair of hiking

boots on that had definitely seen better days. Patrick settled back down onto his back, not wanting to anger this large man. He closed his eyes and tried to slow down his labored breathing. He was breaking out in a cold sweat. "My name is Armand Katos. Just lie still, and breath slowly. I'm here to help," said Armand. His voice was deep and reassuring. Patrick wished desperately that time would just reverse back to when he had first found that dumb note pad. He wished his brother hadn't even shown up at the door..."I would not think such things if I were you," Patrick jumped, not wanting to believe that his thoughts were not even private anymore. "Don't be afraid, It's just a gift I have," Armand said simply. As if mind reading was something actually common. "Who are you? Where am I?" A quick, sharp pain in his chest made Patrick rethink about speaking again. Armand smiled. "All of your questions will be answered in time. Just don't move. Maybe that bit of pain cleared your head a little."Armand laughed at the grimace on Patrick's face. Patrick tried to stay conscious, however kind he was, Armand was still a stranger. It sounded easier to Patrick to just sleep the pain off, but being with a large unknown man was enough to keep him awake and alert.

*Submitted by: Krystiana  
Age: 17 // Location: Pennsylvania  
July 30, 21:03PM*

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As Patrick slowly but surely went to answer the door, there where two police officers at the door standing there with vacent looks in their eyes. One of the officers told Patrick, with a very disturbing look,"Sorry to disturb you with this horrible news this late, but today your dad has died in a horrible car accident. He was speeding at 90miles per hour and under the influence of alcohol." Before the police could finish his statement,Patrick starts to have flash backs of the good times he had with his father. Like the time they went to the park, and Patrick felled off the swing and dad came to his aid with the love only a kid wants.Next thing you know Patrick falls to the floor in hysterical crying saying,"No not my father, no lord why him,why him." As the sun starts to rise the more and more Patrick starts to fells like his life is over, like there no reason to live anymore. But as he sat in his living room crying, there was another knock at the door, it was his mother. Her eyes full with tears, full of of nothingness. With no hope, and no life in the both of them, Patrick and his mother hugged each other as if one or the other is about to leave. In Patrick's house, only sadness fill the house,only the memories of their lost love one filled their mind. The only thing both knew was that they loved him, and know that they lived a good life with Patrick dad. The funeral was held two weeks after his father death. Since his father knew alot of people, and was a decent man, big numbers of people showed up to repay their respects. And on his tombstone reads,"Rest in peace the beloved father, and huband." Both Patrick, and his mom always rememberd their beloved father, and husband.

*Submitted by: Basha Dorsey  
Age: 19 // Location: Atlanta,Georgia*

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July 31, 12:29PM

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So Patrick let only his eyes travel up and down across the room, restraining the rest of his body from moving and causing any more pain. He let Armand tend to his wounds, both men silent as swift fingers changed the blood-soaked bandages. Armand tried to be gentle as possible, but he noticed Patrick gritting his teeth and letting out a tiny welp whenever his fingers pressed slightly onto the cut. Patrick grimaced and forced his drugged brain to recall what had happened. How many days had he been asleep? Sixty three days...Patrick wondered why that number seemed so familiar. Sixty three, sixty three...what was so special about that? And then it hit him. The ninja girl was dead. He...he had...from a Harry Potter spell? But that didn't make any sense...it was...and out of all the spells, why that one? Patrick stared down at his hands, fear suddenly creeping into him. Those were the hands that had killed. He had killed. Patrick shuddered and violently shook his head, trying to forget those thoughts. And a black hole...flashes of light...the shadow man...the key...birthmark...THE KEY! Patrick quickly sat up again, ignoring the pain, ignoring Armand's surprised reaction, ignoring the fact that his mind was still not private-- his panicking eyes sweeping all around the room, faster than ever. Where was the key?!

*Submitted by: Connie  
Age: 13 // Location: Bay Area, California  
July 31, 22:34PM*

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Before he could react, a sense of such magnitude clung and withered in the hollow cavities of his body, forcing him down on his knees. He tried to gasp for air, but a faint crispy, scratchy sound escaped from his throat. He grimaced as a metallic taste emerged in his mouth. His hands twitched uncontrollably as a pool of dark, cherry-flavored blood marked its vibrant color under him. It was at this moment that despair shook his bones, and he lay down and laughed. The laughter could not have derived its roots from happiness, far from it. It was the kind of laughter one would hear at a mental asylum. One of which stemmed from a place no human emotion could define. It was neither joy nor pain. A quickening awakened in Armand," And finally the man has lost his sense of sanity," he said to himself.

*Submitted by: Carina Truong  
Age: 16 // Location: Orange County, California  
August 1, 15:12PM*

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"what happened to yourself...?" said a childhood friend named melina enter the room "more importantly,what happened.. when we were little this never happened....did it?" melina spoke sitting right next to him. "is this what its like to feel so in the dark,to dream any way out and find nothing? to call out to the evil laughter and scream? is power more important then innocent lives?" melina

started to kneel and break down into tears, remembering when times were young and evil was gone....

*Submitted by: lindsay  
Age: 14 // Location: manchester.connecticut  
August 2, 19:55PM*

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What Armand could not understand was that sometimes laughter comes at the emptiest moment in the wide expanse of time. Not only did Patrick understand this counter-intuitive characteristic of the human psyche, he was currently experiencing it. His laughter bubbled up from somewhere deep inside of him, trying to fill the most desolate caverns of his soul before spilling out to fill the desolate caverns in the rest of the world. The laughter in itself was cathartic for Patrick and relief crept through his spine as the laughter was released. It was like scratching a swollen misquito bite, or sneezing or releasing a ladybug from the jar that held it captive.

*Submitted by: Anna  
Age: 17 // Location: Iowa City, Iowa  
August 2, 20:12PM*

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Pain. Suffering. Persecution. He heard one time in life, "coal is pressurized, squeezed at hot depths. Being refined--and slowly into diamond." He had been through this, he had been through hardship--but now... Where was his refined moment? He was crumbling, burning--still brittle coal. If he was a character in a story, he wondered if he was in tragedy or a comedy. Maybe...someone was laughing reading this, watching.

*No. No. No.* He fought it. He had to. If suffering has no reason, why stop? Whether or not. He won't let all this go to waste--he would become great through hardship--he had to, he couldn't waste.

Armand stretched out his hand, in a breath, he let out a curt grunt. His life was going hay wire. He had to hold on to something solid. Melanie was there--pained like he was.

*Maybe I am bent. Not broken.*

He slowly reaches over, and their pinkies touch. She looks, peripherally through her tear trenched bangs. Her mouth moves, as if she is going to say something. But she stutters.

"Remember in Mrs. Andersons class. How we both got in trouble for killing the hamster?"

"Y-Yes."

"See. We are as messed up as we were back then. Or, we are as innocent as

we were back then..."

*Submitted by: LukeA  
Age: 16 // Location: Socal Inland Empire  
August 4, 1:18AM*

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Patrick was about to answer when a sharp pain hit the back of his head like someone had attack him with a shovel. The pain began to pull at his head, as if it wanted to drown him underground. His vision became fuzzy and for a moment the world was black and he couldn't breathe... Light was slammed into Patrick's face and he woke with a start. It took him a moment to take in his surroundings, but when he did, it didn't make sense. He was home, the clock on the wall was chiming, signaling it was 11 o'clock. "I don't have a brother," Patrick thought. "Or a sister. And my parents died in a house fire two years ago..." He rubbed his face with his hands. "Bent, not broken Patrick." The voice came from behind him and he let out a small scream of surprise. "No one is here except me!" His brained cried in automatic response. But when he whirled around, his eyes told him differently. A woman, small in stature, with crooked bifocals, was smiling down at him with a thin smile. She was familiar, but completely a stranger to him. "Hello Patrick," she cooed. "I am Ebony. And it's nice to finally meet you. In person that is." "Ebony?" Patrick sputtered. He didn't understand how the strange author-woman-of-his-life from his dream was sitting in front of him. "B-But you aren't real! You're not real, I was just imagining you and-" "Does this look familiar Patrick?" Ebony cut him off. She held up a white notepad with delicate writing scribbled on the page. "I've been writing for you dreams. Normally, we don't attempt things like this, but they said that they'd make an exception."

*Submitted by: Noel  
Age: 17 // Location: North Ogden, Utah  
August 4, 13:55PM*

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"Y-You've been writing my dreams?" Patrick stuttered aloud. "Yes, but something has gone terribly wrong." Ebony said seriously. Her dark eyes glinted in the light, suddenly making her look evil and malevolent. Fear crept up on Patrick, taking hold of his heart. he could feel its icy fingers sending a chill down his spine. "What's happened?" he demanded. He tried not to show his fear but his voice quaked slightly. He had an all to foreboding feeling. He had felt it all throughout his dreams but dismissed them had insignificant. Ebony steadily stared into his eyes. "Patrick, you are dying."

*Submitted by: June  
Age: 14 // Location: Moorestown, NJ  
August 4, 15:48PM*

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"Now, when say dying --" Patrick stopped. Choosing his next words carefully. "Dying...like in the ground, dead, gone?" Ebony look at him with a look of total seriousness. "Yes, dying...but I have to tell you that --" Patrick interupted. "WAIT. WAIT. WAIT. I can't be dying. I'm too young to die! This, this is an outrage. I demand a lawyer...or..." He was becoming eractic now. "Well, I guess he couldn't do a thing about my death." Ebony watch intently as he rambled on and on and on..."Patrick." She soke in an almost motherly, calm, soothly voice. He looked up , glassy eyed, scared. His heart felt like it was about to burst. "Patrick, you have to calm down. As i was trying to explain before, I don't exactly know when you will die. But, it's coming." A butterfly flew past the window behind her. *I wonder if it knows anything about death.* Patrick's mind began to wander.*Well that's a stupid thought, Hm...I'm sure the life span of a butterfly is not long. Humans know this. butterflies...do they have knowledge how long we live?...* Patrick came back into reality. "If I could just find a way to prevent this." Ebony was still talking. "It's inevitable. Death I mean." She continued to think. "Patrick?" He sat on a chair now, head buried into his hands. He wasn't crying. He was thinking. Ebony appeared behind him. Her presence was unwanted by Patrick but, he said nothing. She began to speak. "I know how I can prevent this."

*Submitted by: Lashayla  
Age: 17 // Location: Aurora, IL  
August 4, 17:58PM*

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Patrick wiped away his tears and looked up at her, a slight glimmer of hope in his eyes. "How?" he asked softly, his voice quivering slightly. Ebony began to pace, wringing her hands, and wrinkling her forehead. Patrick asked again, a little bit louder, "How?". Still no answer, just pacing. Patrick stood up out of the chair,"How!" he said, practically shouting. Ebony stopped pacing,and leaned in close to him, her eyes peering into the very depths of his soul. Patrick could see that she was scared, and he bit his lip to keep from crying again. "Patrick, in order to prevent you from..., from dying. The only way is.." "Spit it out!" Patrick cried frustratedly. "You'll have to start over. Patrick, you'll have to be born again."

*Submitted by: Amour  
Age: 15 // Location: Seattle, Washington  
August 5, 17:01PM*

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All pangs of frustration and anger were instantly replaced with shock. For a while Patrick just stood still, mouth agape at the elderly lady. Realizing she was awaiting his response, Patrick immediately attempted to regain his composure, and failing to do so.

"R-reborn again? W-what, you mean like being reincarnated?"  
Reincarnated...what the Buddhists believed in? ...but didn't that have to do with karma or something like that? To reach Nirvana? Patrick vaguely recalled

learning about it in junior high, but couldn't process anything in his present wrecked state. He should have paid more attention to the lecture back then, when it could have really made more use now.

"I don't have time for explanations. Hope is slipping away from our hands as we speak, so all I need is for you to sign this." She turned a few pages of the notepad, revealing a heavily-worded page, the fresh penmanship scribbled as if rushed. "It's basically saying that you agree to...being reborn..." She hesitated, the word sounding strange on her tongue. "And whatever happens to you afterwards is of none of our, or their concern."

Patrick was then handed the pen that had started all of this mess, the tip quivering as his fingers shook. Ebony stared at him with expecting, desperate eyes, a silent beg for him to do it.

*Submitted by: Connie  
Age: 13 // Location: Bay Area, California  
August 5, 18:29PM*

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"Oh no no no" cried out Patrick all of sudden, his hands trembling and face numbed "how can i do it...NO NO it cant happen. I cant be reborned. How can i die, how can i start a new life again when i still have this one to be completed. " "Do as i tell, life is no joke. This life time will give you the jolts you've never expected, the pain that'll beseech you over and over again and you may never be able to enjoy the normal moments ever again. So why not go for a new life that'll have only happiness in store for you" said Ebony confronting him placing a firm hand sympathetically on his shoulder. He roughly put her hand down and shouted " What if my life is upside down, what if i may not be content, what if life is treating me so ruthlessly but I'll live because there is still a desire, a hopeless desire infectious with optimism that still wants to fight for this life and to live this one and only this one contently. I'll do my best to save my existence and I'll burn these lunatic problems in this lifeterm so that not even its fumes can linger near me." He determinedly turned to face Ebony who took a step backward and then vanished into nowhere. At that moment, that particular soulful moment, he knew what to do. He was determined that life is precious to him, a sweet darling that he couldnt afford to lose that if today presenting problems has once provided him some charismatic moments. He closed down his eyes and remembered himself in the coffe shop, her grandmother smiling at him with a red coloured gift in her hands, his parents clapping for him in a baseball match, smiling face of Margaret. He opened his eyes after remembering these charismatic bygone moments that inculcated in him unbounding happiness and such moments reminded him that he couldnt afford to lose them. He had miles to go on and what is the fun of existence if there'll be no problems to be faced.

*Submitted by: URVI  
Age: 18 // Location: Jammu, India  
August 6, 12:17PM*

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on the other hand this is the life that he needed to finish that he wanted to finish. if he left now all the thing that he wanted to do would never be done. there is a lot more to it then just changing your life to one of total happiness.

*Submitted by: MCACG  
Age: 13 // Location: Delano, MN  
August 9, 11:09AM*

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"I can't do it," Patrick said. I just can't do it. I can't end a life that doesn't need to end. I'm not going to be reborn. That is my final descision."

*Submitted by: Alyssa  
Age: 11 // Location: Delano, MN  
August 9, 11:38AM*

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Ebony was back. Standing before him, a look of pure longing in her eyes. Patrick swallowed hard. "You made my life a nightmare! A total wreck! And you couldn't even bother to think of the consequences brought on by your writing! And NOW, as you finally realize that you've caused me to DIE, you offer me the chance to be reborn again. Where is the sanity that I once had?! Nothing makes sense anymore!" Ebony still held a look of utter calm etched in the features of her face. "Look, Patrick, this is your only hope. Do this or die! I'm telling you, if I had known beforehand what this obsession with writing I have would have brought on, I never would have done this. I shouldn't have, I know. But now I'm apologizing and offering you an escape. So please, take it. Give it a chance. I have no intention of simply letting you perish in front of me." Patrick stared coldly at her. "I want my brother back, and my sister. If I'm reborn that'll never happen. But... I can see the sense in what you're saying... Okay. Give me the paper. I'll sign it." The smile that slowly wove it's way across Ebony's face was unmistakable. "Here. And here's the pen." With shaking hands, Patrick grabbed the pen. And his signature crawled across the page like a spider, searching for it's way home. Lost as he was in the darkness and confusion of his life, he hoped to set things right now.

*Submitted by: Rachel  
Age: 14 // Location: Wright County, Minnesota  
August 9, 11:47AM*

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"Thank you, Patrick. You made the right choice. Thank you." She reached out a hand to give Patrick a comforting pat, but he silently backed away, mouth agape, eyes wide in fear at the image in front of him.

Ebony's shadow was growing, faster and faster, soon twice the size of her, its ghastly darkness seeping around her, filling the room. Patrick found his back pressed to the wall of a corner as he bunched his body together, attempting to limit space and disappear. Even so, the black vapor crept towards him at an alarming rate, contaminating anything that it contacted.

Patrick's brain commanded his body to move, to run, to escape, but he was frozen. Ebony's face was now distorted, her eyelashes growing back to their lush youth, wrinkles on one side dissolving at different times, lop-siding her crooked nose and bulging chin. Her hand was still outstretched, the aged and golden fingernails lengthening and sharpening, like daggers slowly meeting the end of their victim. It was disgusting, but Patrick couldn't tear away from the grotesque scene.

*Submitted by: Connie  
Age: 13 // Location: Bay Area, California  
August 9, 16:34PM*

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A scene only portrayed in a horror movie, one he had once watched with his once sweet Ebony. This, this was to real for him. Anxiety built up and sweat seems to slowly, slowly drip, drip, drip its way down his forehead. Wiping it swiftly with his forearm. "Why are you doing this to me" he pleaded helplessly as if he were a lost dog begging for food. A sort of wine in his voice. "You can now be proud of your life. Of living in a cruel world. Being reborn will give you a sense of reason." she walked of in a seductive Angelina Jolie strut twisting the Phoenix necklace that lay inbetween her breasts. "The Phoenix is a beautiful creature. Able to prepare its own funeral and lay its self down before bursting into flames. Dead. Only for a little while though. Not long after its reborn from the ashes of flames before." Her hand grazed Patrick's face while a touch so light, it felt almost like a feather. "Beautiful. Isn't it?"

*Submitted by: Brianna Dandridge  
Age: 17 // Location: Alexandria, Va  
August 9, 20:35PM*

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"I wish I didn't sign it." Patrick muttered.  
"Why? Your life is the only life that matters, right?"  
"No! No, it's not! My brother and sister! They're people too they have life!"  
" More like did, I gave you another chance at life, once you're reborn you wont care about them. Because you're the one who needs to live. You can change the cruel world, once you're reborn you will be someone."  
"What? I was someone! Until you decided to walk into my life!"  
"Oh, my dear Patrick. Without me you would have no life." Then Ebony slowly walked away.  
"Where are you going? Come back!!!"

Ebony turned around, bit her lip and smirked a little. "Don't speak, just watch. I'm about to show you what your life will be once you're reborn. I do believe you'll enjoy it to the fullest extent."

"No." Patrick said sharply. "I'm done listening to your horrors. You need to stop this, you are insane. This whole mess is insane, I'm starting to think *I'm insane*. And then within all this INSANITY I've realized something."

Ebony glared at him, her eyes full of fiery and rage. "What's that?" She asked through clenched teeth.

"You're wrong."

"I'm not wrong, I wrote your story, and I can erase it in a flick of a wrist."

"Hah, prove it. I don't believe a word you say." Patrick said trying to hide his fear.

"I'll prove it alright. Just you watch. Within five seconds you're world will turn black."

On the outside Patrick looked cool, calm, and collected, but on the inside he was trembling. He realized what a coward he really was. "I can't kill you, but I can cause you tremendous pain. Try not to scream." She chuckled. As her mouth opened and got wider and wider until the room was one big black whole, Patrick's cover broke. He started to sob. Pain flooded his body. He wished he was dead, or that he had never said a word against Ebony.

*Submitted by: Emily Woods*

*Age: 13 // Location: Kenosha, WI*

*August 10, 0:34AM*

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His mind was playing tricks on him. How can he have once thought that Ebony had been there to help him? She had created him on paper, brought him to life, only to manipulate him, push him this way and that, and now she tells him he's dying?

He was lying on the hardwood floor of his kitchen. The stooped, wrinkled figure of Ebony stood above him, watching as his body tried to recover from the pain she had inflicted upon him.

"Now," said Ebony, with an arch of her eyebrow, "Now, can we move on? I really don't have all the time in the world for you. And no matter what you say, you signed the contract. It's binding, so you can't do anything about it. You know, Patrick, eventually you'll see that I really do have your best interests at heart. Now get up."

Patrick pushed himself to his feet, breathing heavily, and threw himself into a chair. Ebony sat next to him at the kitchen table.

She said, "When I said you were dying, I didn't mean dying *exactly*, not in the way that any other human being can die..."

"What is that supposed to mean? You said I was dying. That's the only reason I signed the contract! What--"

"What I meant," Ebony said, "is that you're not dying of cancer, or disease, or illness, but that your story, the story of you that I have created, is becoming increasingly weaker, which is why certain parts of your life seem convoluted to you, crazy, insane. Mel Gibson, for example, Armand, that young ninja lady--all

these are a figment of your imagination and excesses of your story--when a story that's been created has a life of its own but isn't stable enough to support its characters--which means that *your* life is twisting into insanity and destruction." "But," continued the crone, "we can fix that easily. Reincarnation. And because you're *my* special project, I'll even let you come back as a human."

*Submitted by: Emma  
Age: 15 // Location: NJ  
August 10, 18:35PM*

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"I don't want to be reincarnated you witch! I like who I am!" said Patrick irritably. "Besides, how would you reincarnate me anyway, huh?"

"Well, first of I'd adopt a baby, then I would kill you and write your story on your body, then I would write the your story on the baby. After that I would cremate you and, voila', after some weird life boosting chants on the baby, reincarnation!"

"Well," said Patrick sarcastically, "I just learned I'm gonna be cremated by a creepy old lady after she murders me. Now I feel all better." He turned and walked away grumbling when from nowhere blackness descended on his consciousness. "EBONY!" he cried as he fell to sobs.

*Submitted by: Elijah Noam  
Age: 11 // Location: Overland Park, KS  
August 11, 22:05PM*

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Ebony cackled as Patrick fell to the ground, his mop of hair falling over his lidded eyes. Giggling with an almost arcane pitch, she picked the teen up and, with surprising strength, carried his prone form over to the kitchen table in the other room. She laid him down, his hands arranged neatly on his chest and his hair brushed back from his eyes. Ebony went to the cabinet and fiddled around with pots and pans, spices and vegetables. But the spices were things like Essence of Snakeskin, and Solution of Unicorn Powder, and the vegetables were pink and purple, yellow and black, in all different tuberous shapes and sizes. The old biddy sang to herself as she chopped and sprinkled things into the pots. "Hi ho, hi ho, it's down Patrick's gullet you'll go!" She poured the culmination of the odd ingredients down a waking Patrick's throat, the confused boy gladly drinking the poisonous liquid to quench his thirst. He coughed once, then his breathing hitched, blood spewing from his throat in tiny flecks as the poison took affect. Patrick shuddered, then he fell back down to the table dead. Ebony giggled, took out a crying baby boy, his skin black with the words of Patrick's life on him, bounced him on her hip for a while, then put him down for a nap. She picked up a

black bag, pulled out cartridges of ink, needles and a bottle of Sprite. Then the frightening grandmother began tattooing the tale of Patrick onto the boy's skin. The baby woke, sitting up to watch his grandmother's actions. The sparse hairs on baby Aidan's head floated in the staticky air. His mouth open, his fist took place there as he gnawed and watched. Aidan soon grew bored and began chewing on the lid of a jar full of ashes labeled, "Tony's Ashes". The baby smiled and let out a single laugh. Then he said his first words. "Tonees Ashez."

*Submitted by: Divya H.  
Age: 13 // Location: Overland Park Kansas  
August 12, 10:21AM*

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the woman giggled in a evil way as she turned a pizza oven on and shoveled patrick into a large pot. She thought she heard him groan but she perished the thought. He was dead no doubt about it. she tatoood on his arm all the events that marked his life on his arm and then pushed him into the oven. turning on the baby she spoke "you were jesse, and you were also, Tony, Mathew, Nicholas, and Patrick. now you are aiden the youngest life you ever had and as I cremated them all you shall be born." she cackled and turned away to go to her cabinet of horrors.

inside the oven patrick's eyes flickered open. He gasped for air and kicked the oven door open.

*Submitted by: elijah noam horesh  
Age: 11 // Location: OP, KS  
August 12, 13:38PM*

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Then Ebony spun around and hissed. Patrick jumped out of the oven quickly, running straight for the door. But the woman was quick too. She planted herself firmly in front of the cement door. "And where do you think your going?" Patrick eyed the baby. Then he turned himself around and snatched him up. He couldn't leave the poor thing behind with this crazy old lady. He held the baby against his chest protectively. Ebony slowly moved from the door and started inching toward Patrick. Patrick looked around for a window, a hole, or some type of exit. None. Ebony grabbed her cane and arched it upward as she was about to hit Patrick. Patrick stepped backwards and bumped into a shovel. He cradled the baby in one arm and gripped the shovel in the other. Patrick swung the shovel towards Ebony's head. He failed as Ebony intercepted with her cane. Patrick acted more swiftly this time and swung the shovel towards her stomach. Ebony let out a yelp. She fell to the ground writhing in pain. Patrick dropped the shovel and bolted for the door. There were tears in his eyes as he tore the door open. In the corner of his eye he could see Ebony regaining strength as she got up. He looked back one last time and then began running through the dark tunnel.

*Submitted by: Arianna Star Collins*

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*Age: 12 // Location: CO Firestone  
August 12, 18:59PM*

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"Curses!" yelled Ebony. She growled and sat down, the strength gone from her withered body. "No point chasing him on foot," she moaned. "he'll just end up getting lost and I'll pick him up again."

*Submitted by: daniel burnardey  
Age: 10 // Location: Miami Florida  
August 14, 4:17AM*

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Patrick woke up, keeping his eyes closed from whatever horrors Ebony had in store for him.

His body felt remarkably comfortable, considering that he had last been at the side of a road, half-dead but still scared to death (or reincarnation) of what Ebony would do to him.

Where was he now? Slowly he opened his eyes to a bright white light. Was it his time to die now? He blinked, his eyes adjusting. He was in a bedroom covered with posters of some soccer team. What was he doing here? Where was Ebony? "Saaamm!" someone called. It sounded like it was coming from far away or beneath the floor. Patrick heard someone coming up what must have been a staircase, and froze with fear when he heard the voice coming from behind the door. "Sam? Breakfast's ready. Hurry up, and get dressed for school." It was a woman's voice. Smooth, and relatively young, definitely not Ebony, but right now it didn't matter because some woman was about to find out that a strange man was sleeping in her kid's room.

The door opened.

"Sam, I've told you a million times-"

Patrick burst into speech, "Look, I can explain! I'm not some creep or weirdo. I don't even know how I got here. I just need to use your phone and call a taxi. Just let me go, and I won't bother you again." He swung his feet off the bed, and looked at the woman, blinking his eyes. She was oddly tall, almost twice his height. She looked at him strangely.

"Are you feeling okay?" she said.

Well, that was a weird question to ask. Patrick said, "Yes, ma'am, I'm fine, I just need to use your phone..." He stepped toward the door, slipped on some piece of cloth, and fell to the smooth, wooden floor.

"Oh, poor boy," the woman said, picking him up into her arms as if he weighed nothing. He stared at her, in shock, and then looked down at his own body, which was the size of that of an 8 year old and covered in the most embarrassing footie pajamas that he used to wear when he was kid.

*Submitted by: Emma  
Age: 15 // Location: NJ  
August 14, 15:26PM*

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Aidan whimpered, stuck in a large boy's body. His hands, much larger and more mobile now, were exploring his body. His big toes, his big ears, his long legs, and his rounded nose. "Whaaah?" He wailed, a confused note in the cry. Aidan looked around him, seeing brown walls and blue carpet, two chairs on either side of a desk. A large man came in, much larger than the frightened boy/baby. His brown hair brushed to one side, a blue suit clothing his giant's body, the man looked official, smart, like a pillar of a community. Aidan felt as though he could trust this strange man and looked at him with luminescent grey eyes. The man frowned. "Aidan. I can't do anything about it! I know you're an orphan, and you've been through some pretty bad stuff, but you can't escape this. I know being publicly honored like this might scare you, but the president himself wanted to hear you speak! My hands are tied buddy." The man spoke, his hands accentuating every gesture. Aidan understood what the man was saying, his mental capacity expanding almost instantaneously, flooding his brain with information. "M-Mr Colton, I-I can write the speech, but, saying it in front of people....." Aidan shuddered and the words faded off his tongue. Mr. Colton sighed. "I'll help you." He said in a decisive manner. "You can talk to me, and I'll get a teacher the next day, then another teacher the next day, and that way, you can get over your fear." He stuck out his hand. "We will help you Aidan. Just let us." Aidan hesitated for a moment, then took his principal's hand. "Thank you." Mr. Colton nodded at this and Aidan took this kind nod as a dismissal. Aidan walked down the hall, seeing things and remembering. Door! Wall! Girl! Boy! Hat! He went to the bathroom, standing in front of the mirror. He ran a hand over his short crop of reddish blond hair, looking at his high cheekbones and grey eyes. "What's happening to me?"

*Submitted by: Divya  
Age: 13 // Location: Overland Park, KSs  
August 15, 9:09AM*

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as said.. nothing interesting ever happened.. there was a very old man standing on the door. he shouted on me complaining why did i take this long opening the door. i was shoked! he gave me such hard stair when i said excuse me. he started blamming me for all the miss haps happening around the world like bomb blasts, murders killings.. etc saying it all happens because of lazy peoply like me. had we not been this lazy, we would have saved many lives. then he handed me a basket and it had a little injured dog. i gave a question mark through my stare, to whcich he very politly said.. friedrik. i cant save this poor creature, he needs help, you are young,' should be' energetic you can save him.. i cant. have mercy on living creatures. my next word was who are you!! he said he has been living in this appartment here before me, could not pay rent so was pushed out. i could see his last days through his wrinkles. i asked himfor some tea or juice, to whci he just smiled and turnedaround. the dog was mongrul so was no point asking if it belonged to him. before stepping out of my door,n he turned back and said... hes the only one on earth he is left with.. please take a good care of him.... i never saw that man again but that dog is now named BUDDY, my buddy!

*Submitted by: CHARUSHREE  
Age: 19 // Location: india, new delhi  
August 21, 6:48AM*

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"What do you mean?" I don't even know who you are," he said with a very dumfounded glance. Patrick tried to recall of any calling of Ebony. But no such name came in his usually bright head. Maybe she was one of those door to door saleswomen, or she was trying get money for some fake charity. But yet again, why would she come at 9 clock at night. After a long and dramatic pause, Ebony starts ripping open the package like if it's the last Christmas, she'll over have. A big stack of papers start flying out of the package. Sorry!" Ebony screams as she frantically starts picking up papers. "All right Ebony, your games are over, I need to know!" Patrick says vulnerably. Ebony immediately bends down to pick up a worn out single piece of paper. All you need to know is listed on this piece of paper, she says looking at Patrick deadlock in the eyes. Before Patrick can even lay his eyes on the paper, Ebony disappears.

*Submitted by: Olga  
Age: 13 // Location: NYC  
August 21, 17:49PM*

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Patrick was still dumbfounded. So many things had happened when Ebony arrived at his front door. He could still see all the events that had happened, they were still running through his mind like a horse going faster and faster. He was scared and alone. Patrick couldn't decide what to do next whether to tell someone about Ebony and that she was his author. He knew for sure not to write anymore in case he wrote something that could change his life completely but so far Ebony already did. Patrick decided to pick up the pencil and paper and he wrote "I need someone to share all this with." Patrick still realized he was alone without a soul mate so he wrote "Then I met a gorgeous woman with brown natural curly hair, blue eyes, high cheek bones, and very lush red lips." Next thing he knows their's a woman right there with him and exactly as he described her. Her name was Vienna she was beautiful.

*Submitted by: Mikhaela  
Age: 13 // Location: Minnesota  
August 23, 23:44PM*

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Vienna's eyebrows went up as she saw the teenage boy, and she smirked disparagingly. "Too old." Patrick mumbled, then erased the words. Vienna's form flickered and disappeared as he wrote the next words. 'A teenage girl appear in the kitchen, her curly hair tinged with natural auburn colors. Her blueish green eyes are filled with kindness and intelligence, and she has a pretty face. She isn't snobby, but is fast, strong and likes lots of things.' Then he put the pencil down,

a smile on his face as a flicker of light solidified into the girl. Then he hastily wrote. 'her name is Danielle, but everyone calls her Dani.'" She stepped forward, her jeans clean and her hand out. "Hi. I'm Dani. You're Patrick right?" He shook her hand, a stupid grin on his face. She stuck her hands in the black vest pockets, the vest over a white tshirt. "Nice to meet you. So why did you create me?" Just as Patrick was about to answer, he felt a strange buzzing and looked down at his body. He was disappearing and so was Dani! "Patrick?" She asked in a frightened voice riht before they were sucked away, reappearing in an almost empty classroom. Next to Patrick sat Dani, and on his other side sat a boy with reddish hair. Patrick looked down at his desk, freaked out as he saw his name on it. He looked over to Dani, saw the name on her desk, and turned to look at the boy's. Aidan. "Hi! I'm Aidan!" The boy turned to face them. "Are you the other prize winners? I thought I was the only one talking." "Yeah. We are." Patrick pulled a packet of paper out of the drawer on the desk, and Dani pulled one out too. Then he thought he heard something and looked up. Surprised, he saw the baby face he had seen before, in Ebony's cave. The baby Aidan. "Oh!" Aidan grinned. "What?"

*Submitted by: Divya  
Age: 14 // Location: Overland Park, KS  
August 24, 19:58PM*

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He was slowly approaching the door and he was getting fearful. There was so much going threw his mind. "Who is it?" He said with a stutter They just knocked again and didn't answer him when he asked. He though maybe it was someone trying to play a trick on him but why would they keep doing it for that long so he went and tried to turn on the outside light on but the light wouldn't turn on so he was starting to panik. At that moment he ran to the kitchen adn grabbed a knife just in case it was someone bad. He went and opened the door. "Yes?" he said very scretchy "Hello Patrick its time for you to come with me" This person was dressed in all black and was not really showing his/her face and I was terrified i had no idea what was going on. As I was going to grab the knife it flew out of my hand and I was being dragged toward the person. "HELP"

*Submitted by: Stefani Williams PBHS  
Age: 15 // Location: San-Tan Valley,AZ  
August 25, 15:26PM*

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His mouth kinda numb, body tingling, and hands shaking were the reactions Patrick had as he was being fallowed. He took a deep breath and ran up stairs to lock himself in a room. In fear, he began to try to shut the door, but it was to late. The person dressed in black was waiting with his/her foot in the entrance of the door. "Errrg!" The sound of an old door floated around the room slowly as Patrick's heart pounded so loud that it could be heard from miles away. As the door grew open, Patrick's eyes became full moons in the mysterious dark night,

all wide open and visible. As soon as the door completed its intensive opening, Patrick's goggling eyes were exposed to the dark hallway. White fog came through the door making Patrick shake in fear. He couldn't believe his eyes! "Ahhh!" Patrick shouted in fear and struggle. The person in black had viciously sucked him up! No one ever heard from Patrick again, but rumors are that if you ever come near his house around nine o'clock on Thursdays...

*Submitted by: Nancy Perez  
Age: 15 // Location: PBHS - San Tan Valley, AZ  
August 26, 2:36AM*

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People who walk by Patrick's house still hear screams of agony coming from what sounds like a dungeon underneath the house. A local neighbor's curiosity finally got to him when he came across Patrick's house, thus leading to him breaking into it so that he can seek out the noise. The interior of the home was shrouded with spiderwebs and darkness, leaving the neighbor stealthed within the shadows. There was a dim light across the hallway leading into what looks like a basement, or even the very dungeon that lingers with screams of woeful torment. As he approached the door he noticed the dim light is growing weaker with every step he takes towards it, before he knew it he was deep inside of the dungeon and nothing lied inside except the remains of Patrick, and a voice recorder repeating horrible screams. The neighbor was in awe of the moment and before he could turn around to escape the chamber a set of large, heavy doors slammed before him and he would become the next victim of the hauntings of Patrick's home.

*Submitted by: Nicholas Clark  
Age: 15 // Location: PBHS - San Tan Valley, AZ  
August 26, 13:56PM*

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Patrick slowly crept to the door not knowing what to expect. As he came closer he felt his palms began to sweat from all the anxiety. He tried to calm himself down by slowly taking deep breaths but, as he got closer to the door the stranger knocked only this time louder. Boom! Boom! Boom! Patrick heart began to race and he felt as if his skin was going to fly off his bones. Finally as he reached the door he swung it open with a bang. He widened his eyes trying to make out the figure in black. "Who are you?" Patrick retorted. Yet, there was no answer. He looked deeper and he saw a small hunched over woman about 4'2. He wasn't sure of her age but he could tell she was old. He reached out to grab her arm and as he did she grabbed his first. The mysterious woman began to squeeze harder and harder until Patrick felt as if his arm was going to fall off, he begged her to stop. When she finally let go of her grip he stepped back inside and proceeded to shut the door. The old woman stopped it and told the boy he would pay for what he did to her. She was in the light now and he was able to make out her face. Her face was filled with tons of wrinkles along with a nose that

protruded out about 6 inches, she had a huge boil at the end of it and it looked as if it were infected. He had never seen this woman in his life. What was she talking about? What did he do? Questions began racing through his head and he quickly became overwhelmed. "Just leave me alone" he yelled. As he slammed the door in her face. Patrick took a big sigh and locked the door behind him. What is this about he thought. Just then he heard thumping upstairs. Yet, no one was home.

*Submitted by: Samantha Ames  
Age: 15 // Location: PBHS San Tan Valley, AZ  
August 26, 22:57PM*

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Puzzled by this new sound, Patrick quickly ascended the stairs to investigate this new sound. With each flight of stairs Patrick took, the mysterious noise grew louder. He could feel the cold carpet pull at his soft feet as if begging him not to go further. As he reached the last step he felt a cold chill sweep up his spine. He jerked around expecting to see the mysterious woman but instead saw the black abyss of his stairwell. Suddenly the thumping had stopped. Patrick sprinted to his room. His hands shaking as he gripped the cold copper door handle turning it at almost a snail's pace. In what seemed forever Patrick opened the door enough for his head to see what this mysterious thumping noise was coming from. As he peeked he saw a tall man in a pitch black cloak exiting his room from his closet. "Stop!" Patrick shrieked at the intruder but was met with a terrifying grin from a wrinkled old man. Feeling as though his heart was about to explode, Patrick watched as this unknown intruder entered some portal in his closet leaving to go where no man knows. Feeling light-headed Patrick collapsed on his bedroom floor hoping that what he just witnessed was just a dream.

*Submitted by: Zachary Anderson  
Age: 15 // Location: PBHS San Tan Valley, AZ  
August 28, 16:45PM*

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As scared as Patrick was, he got up the courage to believe that the woman had migrated to upstairs. With fear being the only thing on his mind, he decided to open the door and make a run for outside to escape. But to his dismay, the woman was right at the door when Patrick opened it. Patrick let out a very loud and extended yelp. "Who...who are you?" "I am the one you fear most" the woman replied. And with that she grabbed his arm and pulled him out of the house. As Patrick was screaming like a child afraid of the dark the woman continued, with a roll of her eyes, on.

*Submitted by: Paige Harcrow  
Age: 15 // Location: PBHS- San Tan Valley, AZ  
August 28, 17:38PM*

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Patrick began to breathe faster as the thumping sound made its way toward the stairs. No this can't be. A shadow made its way down the stairs as the figure dressed in black took one more step down. He backed up now each step sounding so loud, Patrick was sure people in China could hear them. The woman dressed in black reached the last step of the stairs and stopped. Patrick's heart was pounding so loud he was sure the woman could hear it. She looked up and smirked at Patrick. He felt his throat close up slowly and eventually he stopped breathing. Patrick's world turned black as he heard the woman dressed in black laugh deeply.

*Submitted by: Delia Brown  
Age: 15 // Location: San Tan Valley, AZ  
August 29, 0:34AM*

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The woman dragged Patrick from his house to the middle of the road. She closed her eyes and quickly whispered something in a foreign language, he did not understand, her grip on his arm getting tighter with every second. Suddenly everything turned black. He tried to scream but was deaf or mute in this blackness. No, this can't be, he thought. The woman's voice interrupted his thoughts: Oh my dear, but it already has...

*Submitted by: Delia Brown  
Age: 15 // Location: San Tan Valley, AZ  
August 29, 0:53AM*

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"My story?" said Patrick. "Oh yes, I thought that was clear enough." He stared at her, mouth agape, her nails bearing the color of her name. Patrick then understood. "A Biography...about me." He stuttered at these words, then a ghost of a smile escaped his lips. Ebony smiled too. "Yes, your story, I am glad that you are catching on." He stared at his boots...a biography! He had heard of them at the school library, but about him! What had he done? As far as he knew the only thing worthy of a biography was the time he smacked his teacher upside the head with a banana cream pie. He, of course, hadn't done this on purpose, but merely walked the aisle of the classroom, until Steven Wilson had tripped him and then the cake went sailing the classroom skies on Banana Cream Airlines. He smiled to himself. "No Patrick this is not about the cream pie incident." He was appalled! How did she know?

*Submitted by: Nate Guerrette  
Age: 13 // Location: Litchfield, NH  
August 29, 15:36PM*

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