

A year had departed  
since that fatal day



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

Everyday I pathologically relived those agonizing memories every detail had been scrutinized while sat in this chair being handed chipped mugs of luke warm instant coffee in return for reassurance that I was still present in this empty and hollow world.

I never responded; there was no point, but they gained their reassurance from my deep laboured breathing and went away content. I'd never enlightened anyone as to my thoughts, my inner most feelings; I had no one to trust.

How could I trust them they held out their hand and pulled me back from that cliff top, the only place I felt comfortable. They said they would help me. Instead they gave me a room full of memories; an environment where my goal was unattainable, and concluded for themselves a reason " why" based on half truths and other peoples opinions. " He can't cope, poor chap" was a common phrase for gods sake I wasn't coping, I was planning.

They had people come to sit with me on a Tuesday. All kinds of people: young, old, professional, dole fraudsters, priests.

Sometimes a familiar person would come and sit beside me who'd talk at me and I wouldn't force myself to listen. Sometimes my ears would pick up as they talked about people who I'd known and things I'd done. I couldn't remember them but they made sense. I never acknowledged them and they left soon after, shaking their heads and having a conference in the corridor at my expense.

I only trusted one person, and she was unreachable.

This day had felt different from the outset; something had unbalanced my routine and my usual blueprint of thought. I awoke a little earlier and glared around my room, my cage. This was not my home; it was a prison for my thoughts.

I ambled my way to the lounge; it was an unsettling place, not pleasant like my lounge at home. Our lounge at home. Our home that was.

Instead it was a mild form of hell. I regained my territorial seat near the window and blocked out all the bawls and whimpers from my surroundings and stared aimlessly out onto the main road.

It was morning rush hour and as my eyes filled and discharged, the lights of this dreary winter morning mingled from one colour to another. I saw the box of tissues resting on the sideboard, their miserable attempt at making this unfamiliar room more homely, but I didn't reach for them.

I could have looked round to see what was going on, but I knew. I heard the cries, the crashes, the screams of restraint and the eerie silence that followed. I knew that it was soon to be accompanied by the sound of glass being swept, the tinkling like a wind chime blowing softly in the humid Barbados breeze of my honeymoon. Our honeymoon.

Sat on the beach sipping cocktails and each night making passionate love in the most luxurious apartment in town. It was a happy thought I know but instead it drew a tear.

I stepped back into my world.

Each day was identical.

But not this day, today was a year since that horrendous day. The day I repeat in my head over and over, that I couldn't escape from if I wanted to. But I didn't want to, I didn't want to escape from it, for escaping would be forgetting and I couldn't lose the pressures memories we had. Memories were all I have now.

Nobody knew why I sat here looking at this road. Just as well because if they did they wouldn't allow it. It was a constant reminder.

Most days I would see the same white Astra with the same dented bonnet and cracked bumper, pass over the same spot it did a year ago today. Some days it would be late but it would nearly always be there. Sometimes I would see it on an evening, the new haphazardly applied " Kill Your Speed" sticker strategically on the rear bumper. It would always slow for the crossing. The driver always slowed for the crossing, but he hadn't one day. Maybe one was enough for him. Maybe he knew next time he wouldn't get off so lightly.

They let me out, but I didn't want to go. " The door is open," they said, sure it was open but I wasn't going to pass through it. I could see the world from the 4th story lounge the windows were sealed shut. Shame, it would have been quick and painless, but not part of the plan.

It was 9am; she would have been on her way to work now. I would normally give her a lift, but not that day. That day she wanted to walk. A final goodbye kiss accompanied by a waving hand as she disappeared round the corner, the distinctive clicking of her heels disappearing.

My house was just around the corner from here. Our house. Not anymore.

My things had been put into storage and my landscaped garden has been bulldozed for a square of low maintenance turf.

It was nearly time to meet her. I got up from my seat and wandered to my room. I rummaged round my bedside draw until I found my key. It glinted in the light like a precious jewel. Some would say it looked sinister, but it was the only way I could join her, and I had made a promise so I had to keep it.

I walked out of the room; out of the door and down the four flights of steps to the ground. There was no need to rush, by the time they had noticed, I'd have crossed over.

I walked out of the suburbs until the houses thinned and the city life died away behind me. I passed under the neatly trimmed fern archway and into the grassy pastures where I knew I would find her. I'd only been here once before but I knew my way.

When I reached where she lived now, I sat down. The ground was cold.

I put my hand in my pocket and reached for my key. I watched with intent as I ran the cold metal down the un-weathered skin of my inner left arm. It tingled slightly. I placed the key back in my pocket and lay down, my left arm on the concrete.

I closed my eyes and remembered how it had happened; as I waited for the ice to thaw on the car windows I heard the screech of the brakes and the heart wrenching scream.

I remembered how I had dropped the ice scraper and run along the snowdusted path to the crossing. I remembered how I had looked for her as I ran calling her name louder with each step. I remembered seeing the windscreen of a white Astra smeared with red blood, and now in front of it she had lay there helplessly.

No one had tried to help. I remembered how I had flopped to my knees and gazed into her eyes as she breathed slower and slower. How the sirens wailed in the background. How I had scooped her head in my arms, her long hair that had been so smartly and expertly tied into a tight bun bound with a red ribbon - ruffled. Her designer jacket that I had bought her for Christmas - ripped. I remember how she gazed back and pulled my head closer to hers and whispered " I'm not going to make it, am I?" I remembered how I had croaked back the tears and told her " Wherever you go, I go. I can't live without you" She smiled back at me, a tear rolled down her face and she whispered, " I don't want to leave you. God please don't let me...." She gasped for breath but breath didn't come. She held me tight, looked at me as another tear rolled down her cheek and was accompanied by two of mine. " I love you. I'll be with you soon" I had said. She nodded and closed her eyes. Her arms relaxed and fell from around me.

I had ran back to the house, fumbled at the lock with my frozen blood stained hands and grabbed the knife from the drawer. I had ran back to where she was. I can't have been longer then thirty seconds but by the time I got there all that was left was a pool of blood. An ambulance wailed down the street, taking her away from me. The knife had already cut into my wrist

and that's when they pulled me back, that kind faced policeman had robbed me of fulfilling my pact and my promise.

I opened my eyes I was here now. I felt weak as the blood poured from my left arm onto the cold gravestone. I looked at her name and the faded flowers that her parents had painted onto the headstone.

My eyes felt heavy but as my life flowed out onto her final resting place, the closest I could be to her, I could see her walking towards me.

Her hair expertly tied in a tight bun bound with a red ribbon. The designer jacket I had bought her for Christmas. She reached out a hand and pulled me up.

I took one last look back at myself, and followed her.