

## Shackled to the Basement Wall

No one knows what the future will hold or what tomorrow will bring. There is never a guarantee that when you fall asleep you will wake up the next day.



I woke up that morning like I did everyday before that. I walked to the kitchen: poured some coffee, threw a bagel in the toaster, turned on the news, then sat at the table in the center of the kitchen. I finished my bagel and cleaned the kitchen. I walked to my closet with my coffee still in hand, and carefully chose the outfit I was wearing to the office that day. Placing my coffee on the dresser I stripped out of the clothes I wore to bed the night before and put on the white blouse and black pencil skirt I took out of the closet. Grabbing my coffee again, I walked to the bathroom to finish up my morning routine, nothing more than usual, just a messy bun with natural toned makeup.

Finishing my look with a few squirts of perfume, I returned to the kitchen to pour some more coffee when an urgent alert came across the T.V. The camera panned across the front of an apartment building with a dozen police cars posted out front. The camera settled on a man, in his late 30s, talking about a young woman who had gone missing last night from the building. “Kara Strong, a young woman at the age of 25, went missing when leaving her apartment at nine o’clock last night to join some friends of hers at a bar just down the street,” the man said in a punctual tone. “When she didn’t show up at the bar, her friends came by her apartment and found her door wide open and her purse lying on the ground. Police are pursuing all possible leads at this time and warn everyone to take precautions.” Only barely listening to the newscast I

turned the T.V. off and walked out the door with my keys in one hand and my fresh cup of coffee in the other.

After locking the door, twisting the knob to double check, I walked out to my car, placed my coffee on the roof so I could open the door, and started my drive to work. Listening to some Micheal Jackson, I drove past it. The apartment from the news, the one the girl went missing from. She lived right down the street. I wouldn't have even cared about this building if she didn't go missing. I looked back over my shoulder while driving past all the police cars and crime scene tape, wondering what had become of Kara. As the apartment faded from my sight, millions of thoughts ran through my head: how many times did I see her on my drive to work, on my nightly run? How many times did I pass her by and not say a single thing? How many times?

I put my car in park, gathered up my coffee and bags, and locked the car as I walked, towards the Escrow building where I worked. Walking in the entrance, waving a hand to the security officer sitting at his desk to my left, I entered the elevator. Balancing the coffee and bags, I pressed number six to get to my floor. Feeling the cables lift the elevator up, I sipped some more coffee. Soon it stopped, the numbers on the screen reading Floor 6, I exited and headed straight to my little desk in the corner, dropped my bags of paperwork on my desk then took my seat. Taking one final sip of coffee, I reached into my desk drawer and pulled out my glasses and got straight to work.

I worked four hours straight, then got up and went to the break room for some stale doughnuts and my third cup of coffee, heading back to my desk to continue work until I got off at eight. Nothing out of the ordinary happened that day until it did. The girl in the office across from me knocked on the door, "How's it going in here? I was wondering if you would like to

head out to the Blue Lantern with a couple of us girls tonight?" Her name is Megan Barns, the closest thing I had to a friend. I agreed to her invite, looking back now I wish I hadn't, but nevertheless I did. I finished up the rest of my paperwork and left the building with Megan and the others. We each walked to our cars and left for the bar.

While following Megan down to the bar, I had taken down my hair, glancing in my mirror. I ran my finger through my hair till I liked the way it looked. I followed as Megan turned into the parking lot of the Blue Lantern, a small barn-looking building that sat in a back alley and when you entered it smelled of peanuts and bourbon. The two other girls that came with us pulled in a few minutes later and we all walked in together. While the rest of them grabbed a table, I went to the bar and ordered us all a round of margaritas. I watched as the drinks were being poured when someone came up next to me, "Haven't seen you here before?" I turned to see an attractive man, about my age standing there with a cocky smirk.

I glanced over my shoulder to where the girls were sitting, they were all laughing in unison. I looked back to the man next to me, "Well I don't come here often." We talked for a few minutes while our drinks were being made. After the bartender carefully placed them on the counter, I excused myself and joined the girls at the table. Throughout the night, in between the gossip we were sharing, I caught glimpses of the man from the bar, each time I caught him staring back at me. The night was coming to an end, it was only me and Megan at the table now, but soon it was only me. I sat at the table alone, just stirring the olive around in my drink. When I finally glanced at my watch and it read 10:47p.m. I decided it was time to head back home. I exited the bar, went into the alleyway and headed towards my car when everything went dark.

I felt as though my head was being pounded by a cinder block and I fell to the ground, knocked unconscious. When I woke up I had a raging headache like when I crashed my bike into the tree in our backyard, the blood still dripping from my scalp. I couldn't focus my eyes, but I could tell I was somewhere dark, somewhere cold. When I tried to stand I felt the chains rattle on the ground, I ran my hands down my leg then to my ankle where I felt the cold metal. What felt like hours of sitting in the dark, a sudden bright light came from above me, then I heard footsteps coming down wooden stairs. I heard a laugh then the flick of a switch that led to a light hanging from the ceiling which revealed who the laugh had come from. It was him, the man from the bar. Letting my eyes adjust I looked around the room, the basement I was chained in when my eyes landed upon her, Kara Strong. It was more just her body lying there, lifeless, eyes staring straight through me. Looking back to the man I winced as he brushed my blood stained hair behind my ear, still laughing. He then tore a chunk of hair from my scalp, I screamed, and he left turning the lights off as he went.

Now as I sit in the darkness my future is becoming more clear, I was to end up just as Kara had. Not knowing what happened to me, not knowing where I went. So I sit here, writing this letter to you, mother, because I believe I will never see you again as I will never leave this room where I am shackled to this basement wall.