

## Never let you go

It was really moist and gloomy outside. She put her shoes on, which were kind of dirty and looked like she had had them for ages. Her face was very pale and the circles around her eyes were so dark it seemed as if she had not had a minute of sleep for weeks.

As she went outside a storm came up and she was freezing because she only wore a huge sweater. The girl started to run even though she was not sure where to go. She ran and ran and only stopped when she could not take one more breath, which felt like an hour. To get some rest she went to an old bench and sat down. The voices surrounding her were so loud she could not even concentrate on a simple thing. She looked around. It was so dark out there, not even a single light was glinting. Suddenly someone screamed "They are coming. Run! Run!". The girl jumped up so fast, not even a kangaroo could keep up with her. She ran again without stopping.

After half an hour she saw a small hotel at the end of the street and went inside. It was really run-down and smelled fusty. Behind the reception there stood an old man. He had a hump and looked at her with a creepy toothless smile. When she went inside the ground was creaking and the man came over with a candle. "What do you want?" he asked. "Just a place to sleep. Thought I could stay at yours."

He examined the girl but nodded. "Well, follow me upstairs." She entered the room and looked around. The walls were full of dirt and mould, so was the ground. In the left corner there was a mattress with a thin blanket on it. The man went out, she took her sweater off, laid down and used it as a pillow.

She woke up quite early the next morning, the sun had not even risen but she could not sleep any longer. Suddenly she heard a noise out of nowhere and someone screamed. She tried to shut her ears but it did not work. "Didn't we tell you to run, you useless twat!" "Where? Where should I go? Tell me! I've been running for a week now! Don't know where to go. I am more than 300 miles away from home. From my family. I am alone and I just run. I can't do this anymore!" The girl screamed and banged her head against the wall until it started to bleed.

Next, there was a knock at the door. "Everything alright Misses?" she heard the hotel owner asking. Instead of answering she opened the window and climbed out. The weather outside was still awful but she could not care less and started to run again without knowing where to go. The girl could not even take a clear thought anymore. Only a few torn memories emerged in her mind and she tried to remember what had happened before she ran away.

It was so loud at home that she could not even sleep. She was also lonely all the time because her parents worked 24/7.

After running for almost the entire day she went to an underground station and tried to get a clear thought. She sat there on a bench again and stared at a grey wall. It seemed like she was a stone, she did not move or notice anything. Not even the boy who looked at her for more than an hour. He slowly went to her sat down on the bench and stared at the wall too but she still did not move.

"Weird how nothing changes but everything is so different." he said. "I've watched you for more than an hour now and it seems as if you are somewhere else with your thoughts, aren't you?". She nodded.

"I am Freddie. What's your name?" he asked. "Effy." She mumbled. "I am pleased to meet you Effy." He smiled. Slowly she averted her eyes from the wall and looked Freddie in the eyes.

All of a sudden tears were streaming down her face and she hugged him. "What's wrong darling?". No words came out of her mouth. "We should get out of here. C'mon." Freddie said. He grabbed Effy's arm and the both ran through the underground station.

As they were outside Freddie waved at a man in a rickshaw. "You want to go for a ride?" the man asked.

“Yes. To the field, please.”. Effy did not stop shaking and crying so Freddie put his arm around her and did not let her go.

When they arrived at the field they left the rickshaw. Freddie took Effy’s hand and said “It’s better out here, isn’t it?” “Totally.”

He put his hand at her waist and they started to dance. Effy’s mind was free at this moment. Freddie saw the relief in her face so he did not stop to dance with her.

After a couple of hours Effy threw herself into the high grass. “You see this Freddie?” she pointed at a constellation. “Looks like an old woman.” Freddie answered. “They have faces under their skin.” “Skin?” Freddie asked sceptically. “Between this world and the next.” She breathed heavily. “Their tooth and their claws come out. Everything tries to get broken.” “Have you been taking something?” Freddie asked. “What do you mean?” “I mean pills or something.” “A pill with their face on it.” Effy replied.

“They never talked to me. Just work. Work. At the moment it started I knew I’d never be the same again. I didn’t know what to do with this feeling. But now they know it and they are hungry. Yes, really. Damn hungry Freddie. As long as I can think they are trying to hunt me. Now they are ready. They are strong enough to break through. I can’t cope with it any longer. I could do it when I was strong but it makes me weak. They make me weak. Now I am done. Done.” “Effy!” Freddie took her hand again while she was really hysteric. She looked in the distance and had a panic facial expression. “No one is there Effy.” She started to scream. “I can’t let me go. Now they are ready. They are approaching.”

“I’ll fight them. Damn I’ll fight against them Effy.”

Freddie ran and fought against the air. “Go away. Go away you damn twats! I’ll kill you all. Go away. Leave!” he yelled.

Out of the blue Effy started to laugh heartily. But as he came back she screamed “I need to go home Freddie. Bring me home, please! I don’t want them to come back. I am never alone.”