

Pavement pancake

The hypnotist promised he could help.

He vowed distraction. Deliverance. Pledged distance from dark dents among the tenebrous smoke of my past.

I sat on his lumpy, moth-bitten couch. The noisome stench of Florida filth filtered through the spider-webbed windows, sinking the sagging, one-bedroom apartment in fumes of a failing economy.

Floorboards creaked. Socked feet shuffled my way. I lifted my eyes.

He smiled down at me. "It's going to be okay," he said slowly, softly, as he placed a dirt-caked hand on my trembling arm. "Don't be scared. Close your eyes."

Head in my hands. Blind.

A direful feeling settles in my stomach. Something's not right.

I feel him beside me. The heat of his body. "Take some deep breaths."

Nose crinkled from the stink, I steadied my pounding heart and breathed.

"Open your eyes."

Blood.

Dripping on my white pants. Soaking into my skin. Red blotched watch in his hand, swinging.

Lost. Falling.

His bloodshot gaze blazes into mine. Teeth yellowed from decades of smoking, arranged in a wicked smile. "You foolish girl."

I saw it all.

Screeching tires, bloodcurdling screams, unseeing eyes.

Scarlet splotches on the pavement. A succulent, limp heart, which once beat for me.

Except this time, it's worse.

The car revved, rolled over his body, reversed, rolled over it again. His bones crunched. With every roll, my lover flattened into the pavement.

I screamed. Flailed my arms. Wrestled against the force pinning me down, forcing me to watch my past amplified.

His pancaked corpse jerked violently, before straightening. Bloodied, mangled fingers brushed at patchy pants, combed through greasy hair. His glassy white eyes met mine, looking but not seeing.

His bruised lips formed a smile.

All his teeth were gone.

His mouth was a gaping, dry hole. Breath came in shuddering wheezes.

“Hello there, my love.”