

DRAGGING HOOKS

The curtains danced on the night breeze and the lights from her father's pickup caressed the faded prairie flower wallpaper as he pulled up the dirt driveway. She heard her mother's rocking chair hesitate and then rock a few times as her mother left the comfort of it to meet her father at the door.

The old pickup truck did not stop at the front of the house, but continued around the house to the barn. The engine sputtered and missed and the headlamps lit up the old barn door. The small pebbles could be heard scooting across the ground as the barn door was pulled open.

Sally, holding her infant to her shoulder, lets the screen door smack the door frame as she walks out investigate what her husband, Tony, is doing in the barn so late in the evening. The summer heat is slowly parting its way as the evening turns the grass under her feet into a wet, cool walk across the yard.

"Hey Tony, what's up? Where have you been?" Tony comes out of the stall on the far end of the barn. "The Wilson's girl has come up missing and they found some of her cloths snagged on the edge of the bridge. So they want to drag the river." Pulling on the thick moss colored ropes, he drags the hooks across the dirt floor billowing up dust and fibers of straw in its wake.

Sally covers the infants face to avoid him breathing in the dust. "That's terrible! Amy was just about to graduate next week. They have any clue what it might be?" Tony grabs the rope and begins his swing to get leverage to place it into the bed of the truck. The hooks scrape up some rust as they slide across the bed.

Tony wipes the sweat off his forehead onto his faded shirt. "She has been hanging out with the Jackson's boy, Bobby. I always thought that kid was not wired right." Gripping the door of the truck, it swings open with a clunk from years of abuse and being over worked, just like its driver. "You two get inside till I find out what is going on. Check in on Holly, and tell her I will see her in the morning."

Sally watches as the truck heads down their holler, on its way over the ridge, where you can see red and blue lights reflecting off the nights gray clouds painting a forbidding gloom over the residents.

The Lost:

I hear your footsteps coming into my house I know it's you, for who else could it be? Dad's sitting in some bar and my mother is ten years dead in the mud from that violent summer evening. The night I witnessed the true color of blood, the night that will forever be buried deep in that murky riverbed.

Yes it has to be you, the one who is going to save me, or thinks she can. Your long black hair and your faultless olive skin, and your dark brown eyes-- the same color as the waters that run so deep just out back. You took a shine to my bad boy exterior, and you so polished and cleaned, wanting to put some of that shine upon me, while I tarnish you anyway I want too.

You finally walk into my room that glows orange from the light of my old stereo. You try to adjust your eyes, cursing the fact my blinds are shut, keeping out the last bits of sunrays as the day moves into even more darkness for me.

My eyes make contact with yours, as I look and take in all I can, and then return my eyes to the floor even though all I wanted was to look some more. You there in that light blue summer dress, and your legs parted in such a stance that left my mind in a flowing spiral imagining all those dark passages I longed to seek out.

Your voice comes through to me in waves as you ponder why I always insist sitting in the dark alone all the time. Even as smooth and faint as you make it, you still shatter my thoughts and logic, and my dreams collide into one as they ripple together.

I open my mouth and wait for what seems like forever before my words find their way to form and drip from my lips. I warn you that today is a really muddy, dark day for me, and to avoid my presence if you know what is best for you.

Beyond what I ask of you, you still insist upon your righteous desires to make me be normal, or what you and everyone in this town considers normal. The mechanical arm on the turntable releases the next record and the needle digs into the groove. As the sound from the next album fills the room, you become even more agitated.

“Bobby!” you scream. “What is wrong with you? I’m going to give up on us. This is not working anymore.” I give you a glance and give out a grunt as you try to turn on the light. My voice cracks with a dry murmur, “Leave the light out of this room.”

Your legs tense up with determination as you advance even further towards the light. Your voice is now becoming shrill with no mistaking to be heard. “This is it Bobby. You’re getting out of this room and doing something with me today.”

The sound of your footsteps now sounds like a beating against my head as you move towards the light. My reaction time now is quick and as fast as a falling raindrop hurtling towards the earth. I leap and block your path to the switch.

Without a sound, our bodies crash into each other. We hit so hard, I feel as if our skin crumbles under the impact. Then after we scatter onto the floor, the sound finally finds its way and washes over us.

The thud of our bodies echoes through my head and I hear your moans of pain. As I lay there, I hear another sound: the thumping of your heart. I see your delicate skin pulse

with each thump. Sweat glistens and flows down your chest in a path I have so longed to follow myself. But that path leads to the dedication of my soul, my time, and my truth. And I am not ready for that.

Your body lies there, and you're trying to pull yourself out of the murky depths of your conscience. A crimson droplet forms in your nostril and builds up until it's as if a levy has broken, and a steady stream of blood begins to flow.

What have I done? There is once again a flow of blood that I want to drown my guilt in. The stereo is muted out as if I'm listening to it under water. All I hear is that precious heart beat that screams out, telling me that I could never love you the way you deserve to be loved. Each beat reminds me how I will never be able to give you what you will forever look for in me.

I know no matter how much pain I will cause you, you will never give up the task of changing me into what you want me to be. You can claim that I'm selfish, but in the same line of thinking, it is also you who are selfish. This is one of those relationships that every parent fears their children will find. Such a tragic love. A lover's suicide.

My knuckles are bleeding and running down my fingers, making my grip on your body even harder to hold onto. This blood, your blood, and my blood mesh together, mixed with my perspiration, causing more difficulty as I drag your body through the thick woods into the darkness. The darkness I begged you to leave me in.

Will this day be burned into my memory till the day that I take my last breath? This moment, this incident on the bridge. I pull the sacks out my back pocket and fill them with rocks from around the entrance to the bridge.

Each sack, all four, are getting at least twenty pounds each of rock that will hide my shameful act from the world. You will submerge into this dark murky river, the same river we both were baptized in. This will be where I leave you, and you will finally leave me.

Your body falls lifeless, evenly weighted down with the solid earth tied to you. You seem to float as in an angelic grace. You were my angel and I the fallen angel, no matter what I would have put you through, you would have always been my angel. This act is the only way I know to keep me from hurting you anymore.

Your body plays upon the surface of the water before it submerges into the depths; this is the result of your brightness and my darkness. I smothered out that light, the light you wasted on me. You deserved much better, but I know you never would have found it with my soul in your heart.

I continue my way across the bridge in the opposite direction from which I came, to the place of letting go.

Into The Deep

The blackness fades as my mind adjusts to my new perspective. I can't open my eyes. My body has lost all energy. Pain rips through my body as I feel your thick, careless hands wrapped around my ankles, as you drag me through the wetness.

I feel with complete microscopic detail every plank in the wooden floor of your house. Each knot and splinter digs further and further into my pain threshold. What have you done to me now? Why do I continue to let you hurt me?

I feel a cool breeze that electrifies my skin even more, as I get pulled through your front door and down the steps of your porch. Why is this happening? I wanted to love you, to save you. This is not how I wanted it to end.

I was going to offer you my love tonight, offer you my sin to make that unforgiving connection. I wanted you to be my first, my only. We could have looked back on this moment. Now this moment will be looked upon, but not be me, for I fear my minutes, my seconds are very limited.

Why can't I wake up why can't I stop this from happening? Is this my chosen path? Did my stream of life have its destination already planned? The smell of the woods fills my lungs. The departed dead leaves from last winter that coat the forest floor sticks to my skin and tangles its way into my hair.

I feel the cloth of my summer dress tear away exposing even more of my skin, as my panties struggle to cover my parts that I wanted to share with you this evening. But now they are threatened to be offered in the most violent way I could have ever imagined.

Your hands are struggling to continue your grasp on me as I get drug further and deeper into the darkness. A new sensation enters my senses as I smell the coldness of the river mud approaching. So this is how it will end? We are brought to the river to wash away our sins and now my thoughts of sin end within the same river.

The approach of the river brings a chill across my skin as the air fills with dampness; I start to feel another dampness that starts rolling from my eyes, the eyes I still cannot find the strength to open. The tears roll down my cheeks: not tears of pain, but tears for the lost. I tried my best to find you while you stood right in front of me.

The path you pull my lifeless body over now changes into what feels like a more worn direction of flow, a flow we take for granted. We, at times, feel like we wonder around aimlessly, but we travel the same roads and directions we find ourselves in everyday.

The earth turns to pebbles that dig into my skin revealing another form a pain, but still not enough to wake me from this paralyzing dread: this fear that I can not change what is about to happen to me.

I feel the coldness of steel and the rush of the sound of the river below me. The grating on the bridge is all that lies between me and my never more. I feel your hands finally release my legs. The sound of you digging around for something peaks my interest.

Your return brings realization as I feel you tighten rope around my legs and arms. The arms I reached out to hold you with, and so many times, you would just turn away and slip your way out of. Now you tie together my legs: the legs I wanted to open and bring you into me. I hear the rocks clanking together: the rocks you collected to hold me down, and envelope me into the river mud never to be found.

As the rope tightens I feel your arms surround me, the connection I forever longed for since the first day we met. Now the last touch of human contact is from the same person snuffing out my light of life. The hours I spent imagining the day you would take me into your arms are finally answered but the dream has turned into my nightmare.

I feel the rail of the bridge dig into my back as you lean me against it to drop me into the watery grave just below. I smell your sweat against my body as you come in close to get a better hold. For one moment, I believe I feel you breath me in, I believe that I feel a tear falling from your eye.

Your hand feels further down my skin. As you wrap your hands around my hips, they feel so right around my blossoming woman form. I begin to think of how we could have fit together in that perfect sensual way of warmth, of a loves embrace. Now your hands are wrapping around me to just let me forever be disconnected from you.

As your hands lift me up over the rail, I feel my panties snag upon its roughness. For what seems like an endless moment, I find myself floating through the air. With no control over my body, I cannot tell which way is up or down.

Even with my eyes closed, I still see your face over the edge, watching me falling away from you. Falling further and further away, I imagine that the glistening in your eyes are tears that will become part of this river. I will find myself in wondering of what might have been.

The water caresses my skin as it surrounds me, I then feel the heaviness... it is so heavy down here. The black water fills my lungs and, as I choke it out, I only find myself taking in more. The blackness and darkness you always found yourself in, now has captured me, and I will do nothing more now, but look for you here.