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Age 16

I am Winter

A non-existent realm of happiness and bliss, this was my only escape form my inner rage and painful memories, my only lullaby to dull all the deception and betrayals I have encountered in my sixteen years. This is all I have to my name. My name, a reminder to me of true irony and metaphor: Winter, the season of depression and the altering of life on Mother Earth. Change occurs from blossoming flowers and buzzing bees, to the cold silence of the falling snow, a white wonderland masking the rebirth and beauty of what my ancestors left me, covering all that is beautiful and replacing it with a frigid yet menacing blanket of white ice. I am winter, the strongest and most delicate of all four seasons.

"Winter! Get down here!" screamed Marly. I suddenly awoke, startled out of my slumber. How long had I slept? I remained in my horizontal position, unmoving, unrelenting. "Dammit Winter!" Get down here before I lay the leather strappings on your hide!" she hollered. I stared deep into the paint scattered design splattered lazily onto the ceiling, and slowly blocked out the vociferation and curses I heard. I closed my eyes and listened to the footsteps near my bedroom door. The noise seemed almost harmonious, like a heart beat of a newborn child. The sound was terribly beautiful, and somehow in my dilemma, I managed a smile. Then the door flew open, my mother stood swaying, drunken, in the doorway. I braced myself for the beating I knew I had coming, but it never came. Instead Marly proclaimed, "Your sister is dead" as if it were a normal everyday concept, and staggered back down the stairs.

Destiny Batiste couldn't have picked a better night to commit suicide. On this particular Sunday, life didn't feel worth living. Feeling angry and trapped by a mother I barely knew, I lay motionless; Confined to my room for a punishment that I could not recall committing. Crash! Bang! Suddenly the sound of loud shrieks and vulgarities,

erupted from the living room. Followed by objects being hurled into the walls, of which I assume missed their original targets. I could hear World War III start downstairs, like every other night; painfully clear and sadly tolerable. "Baby! you know I never meant that!" Marly cried hysterically. "No one comes before you, no one!" The silence that always followed disgusted me. I didn't dare envision what my mother did when everything would go silent, so I closed my eyes and began the first stage of self hypnosis.

I floated off into a light dream of well being, that can only be found in the midst of my delusional mind. I stand looking into a sea of squirming, fidgeting high school kids. I don't feel nervous nor excited, just mutual. I scan the large class and spot a free desk towards the back. As I walk down the isle towards my desk, I see who is settled down beside me. Dark mysterious brown eyes hungrily engulf my physique, without concealing the notion. I sit down and feel the heavy stare of those mysterious eyes. I slowly look over and take in the boy's strikingly good complexion. His face, mean but sophisticated, his perfect nose, and menacing look. He was easily the best looking native I had ever seen. But I had never seen this boy before. I felt as if I knew him, but I didn't. Suddenly, I was no longer in a classroom, but in a very fancy room, with the lights dim and candles lit in almost every inch of the room. "Hey Baby" came an enchanting voice from somewhere in the room. "Come here." I looked behind me and saw the mesmerizing face once again. He stood dressed almost formally, holding two glasses of champagne. I wanted to ask who he was, but instead I said "I had a great night". I looked down and saw a stunning red cocktail dress clinging to my every curve. I looked up again and he was standing inches in front of me. I could hear my heart beating faster and faster in my ears. He slid his muscular arms around my waist, and pulled me close. "Live with me" he whispered. I looked right into his eyes, and hypnotically answered "Okay."

Beep, beep, beep. I woke up confused and really tired. The digital clock flashed a red 7:30. "Ugh" I moaned, and rolled out of bed. I suddenly remembered my dream and sat back down. Who was that boy? Why was I dreaming about him? Who is he? I tiptoed

across my room and quietly opened the door, and descended noiselessly down the stairs. I took one look at the living room, and cringed. Jewelz, or so they called him, was sprawled out on the sunken couch, while my mother slept on the cold, stone floor. I felt no pity, no remorse for my dysfunctional family. I began cleaning, starting with the dozens of wine bottles littered all over the stained carpet. It was disgusting how my parents lived, in their tavern of filth and neglect. Their personal errand girl and maid, me. That was my life, cleaning after my mother and her sloppy boyfriend. I finished the living room and moved onto the kitchen. After five gruesome hours of labor, I retired back into my room, my sanctuary. Tired and sleepy, I laid down to take a nap.

I was standing amongst a group of ecstatic girls. Laughing and talking hysterically. I looked around my surroundings and realized I was at a party. "Hey, Des! Wanna hit?" said an unfamiliar voice. I looked down at what he was offering, and seen a pink pill with an exclamation mark on it. Surprisingly I reached out and grabbed it. My hand moved towards my mouth against my own will. I walked away and grabbed a beer out of the fridge. Almost instantly my heart began to race, my senses increased, and suddenly everything felt weird. My vision was blurred, but I could still see, I could feel the air around me and hear things no one else could. I felt terrified by this feeling, but I was laughing. What was happening to me? I was abruptly interrupted from my thought by a familiar arm pulling me by my waist. There he was again smiling down on me. "Let's go try a couple lines in the back room" the mysterious boy breathed into my ear. "Okay" I giggled.

"Winter!" Marly yelled. I slowly came back to reality, puzzled by what I had just dreamt. "Winter!" She bellowed again. I dragged myself out of bed and opened my door. Marly stood swaying, drunken once again at the foot of the stairs. "Are you stupid or just deaf!?" she slurred. "What?" I responded bitterly. "Jewelz is hungry, make him something to eat." Before I could protest she simply walked away, enraged I walked towards the kitchen. Why can't he cook? I thought angrily. "About time you got up, can't just rot up there now that your whore sister is dead" Jewelz smirked. I don't know how it

happened or how I mustered enough courage to do it, but I did it. I grabbed a frying pan and calmly walked over to Jewelz and started beating him with it. I could hear my mom screaming from somewhere behind me, but I was too entranced by the blood I created, I couldn't stop. "Winter! I'm sorry, I'm sorry! I never meant it" cried Jewelz. I stopped only because I was satisfied by what I saw. Jewelz's nose was completely on the right side of his face, his face cut in every patch of skin showing, and his jaw hanging like a flower basket off a beam. "Make your own food" I declared, and turned on my heel past my mother, who was cowering in the corner, and up the stairs. Once, in my room I walked straight over to my bed. Frying pan in hand, and collapsed onto the dirty rags on my bed and fell into a deep sleep.

"No! I won't do it!" I screamed uncontrollably. Smack. "No Kenny, Please!" Smack. I hit the wall hard and slid to the floor. I couldn't see out of my left eye and I could feel the blood trickling down my face. The boy no longer looked pleasant, hatred filled those mysterious eyes. "Great!" he exasperated. "Now, I can only get half of my money, because of your bloody face!" he yelled. He bent down and grabbed a fistful of my hair, forcing me to stand. He threw me onto the bed with such force that my head banged against the headboard, and left me semi-conscious. "Why are you doing this" I moaned. "You didn't think I was doing all of this for free, did you?" he sneered. The front door opened, and a tall fat figure stood in the doorway. "Ah" exclaimed Kenny. "This her?" the man asked. "Yep, this is Destiny." The fat man approached and I caught a glimpse of him. He had pimples covering every inch of his face, beady little eyes, and a pig snout nose. I seen the two exchange money and seal the deal. "She's all yours" Kenny said happily, and walked out the door.

I could smell the stink of body odor and sweat, as he eased himself on top of me. Smelt the disgusting breath as his lips moved all over me. He grabbed my arm and flipped me over, so I landed on my belly. He ripped my pants off with such ferocity that I yelped. He reacted almost instantly. "Scream again, and I'll kill you." He grabbed my hair and entered. The pain was overwhelming, and I started to cry. "Am I hurting you?" he



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said sarcastically, and flipped me back onto my backside. Frightened and speechless, I silently cried.

I woke up screaming in the dark. Beads of sweat lined my forehead, terrified by what I had just dreamt. I began piecing together my dreams, and slowly figured out what they each meant. I figured out why my big sister killed herself. Not only did I know, but I felt it. I felt how scared she had been, how manipulated she really was, and how lonely and dirty she felt. I know now. She couldn't bear knowing what she had done, just to survive and feed a deadly addiction. I wouldn't blame her. My sister's destiny was her own fate.

Raised in poverty and in a world of deceit, lies, alcohol and drugs my sister's name was a foreshadow of our family's behaviours and lifestyle. I am Winter, my late sister showed me through dreams how alcohol and drugs destroyed her and our people. We once prospered as a nation, but like my sister died inside. I am Winter, the most delicate and strongest of all four seasons. My life will prosper the way my sister's should have.