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I've been waiting for this day for 3 years. May 10th, my eighteenth birthday. I sit in my dark bedroom, sweat dripping down my brow, and a horrid twist in my stomach. My plans and my bag have been prepared for my departure for months. I have to escape this prison.

Three years ago, my parents said they were going on a quick trip, but never returned. Then, I heard the news. They had died. Two days after the funeral, my Uncle Abacus showed up on the doorstep, dismissing our staff at the door, swiftly making our house his own. When my friends started calling on the phone, my uncle would snatch the device from me and claim that he was "homeschooling" me and that I needed to study. But in reality, I was being held captive inside my own home.

Uncle Abacus sends me to bed without food frequently, and I'm always starving. But it's been like this for the last three years I sustain myself off anything I could find. Once, in my bathroom, I found fish food under my sink from when I had a pet goldfish. It was old of course, but I ate it anyways. When Uncle Abacus found it in his heart to feed me it was usually stale bread or cold gruel. I was lucky enough to have my own bathroom where I'd get water from my faucet each night.

I know his actions are out of greed for my family's business and inheritance. The selfish man doesn't even care about his own wife, Aunt Beatrice. (Aka Aunt B.) After dismissing the staff of their duties, Aunt B. has been doing it all. I'm not quite sure why she stays with him, but she definitely deserves better. Aunt B. was cooking dinner, pork yams with sparkling water and wine. Like always, Uncle Abacus sends me to bed and eats away while Aunt Beatrice watches me with pity as I walk away looking at the pork yams, licking my lips. I drank faucet water and ate stale bread again.

Luck was on my side today, as Uncle Abacus agreed to accompany Aunt B. to the store to buy more food and household items. As they went outside the door, I immediately went to the kitchen. I ate Cheez-its, Twinkies, a peanut butter and jelly sandwich, and I could go on and on. It was great. Until my lips and tongue started swelling up, my face as red as a tomato, my cheeks huge as if there were gigantic oranges in my mouth, and worst of all, Uncle Abacus came home a couple hours later. He saw the wrappers in the trashcan and went straight to my room. The swelling stopped, but my lips cheeks and tongue were still puffy. He had noticed, no shout of a doubt. "Ashley!" He said to me, "What do you think you're doing boy?!" He grabbed me by the hair, stared me in the eyes, and get near my face. "Nothing sir." I responded as I tried to back away from his red plump face. He'd laugh "You better not be. It's too soon for you to die boy, you're net eighteen yet." My birthday was only a few months away now.

After that incident, I knew I needed to get out, and quickly. Two and a half years of suffering with my Uncle Abacus and I've had enough. That night I began to plan. I knew I needed money and supplies. I remembered that the guard dogs would be attentive since I tried my escape before. So, I decided to smuggle some meat the day I was leaving. Over the next few days I discreetly searched the house. My equipment came from my dad's old military trunk that was carelessly put in the attic. I found a flashlight, bandages, a hundred dollars, and a compass.

The day passed by slower than ever before. I think the whole world has turned on me. Finally, midnight. I've been waiting for this day for 3 years, May 16th, my eighteenth birthday. I sit in my dark room, sweat dripping down my brow; and a horrid twist in my stomach. My plans and bag had been ready for my departure for months. I snatched my bag, then ran quickly down the stairs. I smuggled pieces of steak, hoping Uncle Abacus wouldn't notice I had taken them. I ran outside as swiftly and quietly as can be. I tried really hard to stay quiet so the dogs

wouldn't wake up. I made twigs snap which startled the dogs and they started to hulk. I hushed them up with delicious steak. Hoping Uncle hadn't woken up, I ran towards the backside of the fence and went through the back gate.

I was free! Fresh air had filled my lungs and it felt so pleasant. I walked down to the forest and realized; I didn't know where I was going. I found a tiny shelter and decided to get some sleep.

In the morning, I woke up at about 8:37 am. I decided to eat my first meal in the tiny shelter I had found last night. After breakfast, I decided to go travel a bit more. I felt guilty because I left Aunt B. with that monster of an uncle. But I ignored the hurtful feeling and kept going on until sunset. I was in Mississippi, but now I had to have been near Blaiklock Creek since I was close to a stream, the stream was calming. I had hoped to find shelter by sunset but I didn't get so lucky. It had to have been at least fifty degrees outside. I heard wolfs in the distance. I huddled next to a tree and went to sleep. In the morning, I drank a sip of my water, and ate a piece of stale bread. I didn't know my final destination, all I knew is that I was free.