

Guardian Angels

It has been three years since C.J., an 18-year-old senior in high school, lived the life of fame. He used to have the most friends, the most touchdowns, a beautiful girlfriend named Emily with long red hair, and outstanding grades in all of his classes except for algebra. He had a “D” in that class. His life was the life that any boy would want. Then all of it changed because of one invitation. His best friend was throwing the party of the year. There would be girls and all of his fellow football team mates in attendance. He also mentioned that there would be food and drinks.

When C.J. got there, music was blasting out of the speakers. Every one was dancing and looked as though they were having a fun time. Some time had passed and it started to get darker. Someone pulled out some cigarettes and all the kids started to form a circle. C.J. joined the circle thinking when it became his turn he would just pass it to the next person. However, when it got to him, C.J., not wanting to look like a scaredy cat, tried the cigarette. Then someone brought out some liquor, again, C.J. tried it. It felt as though it was burning all the way down his throat. His friends encouraged him to drink more until the bottle ran out.

The next few months C.J. would drink the drug in secret, not wanting his parents to find out. In the evening, as C.J. was leaving to go to football practice, his parents called him into the living room. Cautiously C.J. sat down on the couch.

“C.J.” his mom said slowly, “we want you to know that we love you very much and support you in everything you do.”

“Oh, come on Ellen, just to get to the point,” his dad told her with a quiver in his voice.

“C.J. we found this under your bed in your room”, she said, pulling out his most recent liquor bottle. C.J. with a look of dismay on his face listened as his parents told him how disappointed they were and what effects liquor could have on his body. They said that if he wanted to stay in football he would have to promise them he wouldn’t drink any more and he would have to give up his phone for five months. C.J. took this hard. He could see the sadness in his mother’s eyes. The disappointment on his dad’s face. That night he made a decision... he was going to run away.

That night he went into the kitchen and stole some money from his mom’s purse, put some clothes in his suitcase, packed a small lunch and went out to the road to catch the bus.

Three years later...

Cars zoomed by causing leaves to stir. Under the overpass, under some old smelly blankets lay a 21-year-old man. He has been missing from his home for three years now. An old

man in tattered clothes walks up to him and asks if he's got any food. C.J. looking up from his bed answers him with a shake of his head. Disappointed the old man asked him how long he had been under the bridge. "Three years," C.J. responded. The old man sat down next to him and said, "that's a mighty long time to be away from home for some one so young. What's your name boy."

"C.J."

"Sounds like the name of a football player. May I ask why you ran way"

Suspicion must have showed on C.J.'s face because the old man said, "don't worry, I'm not going to tell anyone, I have no one to tell."

C.J. told him everything that had happened, from the party, to the conversation with his parents, to him running away. The old man listened intently with pity showing on his face. By the end of his story C.J. had tears streaming down his face. The old man wrapped his arms around the young mans body as in he were a little boy. "Thank you" C.J. whispers.

"No problem," the old man says sweetly, "now go find a phone and call your parents. Tell them you're sorry and how much you regret running way. Tell them how much you love them and how you really want to come home"

"Okay" C.J. says in a scared but relieved voice. As C.J. turns around and begins to walk off, the old man whispered under his breath, "be brave young C.J. you have a long life ahead of you."

Turning around abruptly remembering he forgot to ask the old man's name he looks back. The old man wasn't there. He had simply vanished.