

As the prisoner entered my room, I stared him down with an intimidating glare that I had spent much time working on so that it was perfected, able to send grown men to their knees. He was invading my own little universe, and from the moment he walked through the door, I was in control; well, I thought I was.

As the boy strolled across the room, he met my gaze with honest green eyes that told a much older story than his young face portrayed. It caught me off guard for a minute and I was forced to avert my eyes and recollect myself before turning my fierce gaze upon him again. He took a seat in the chair across from mine and scooted in as close as possible so that we were separated only by the mandatory, yet useless, metal table that stood awkwardly in the middle of the room. I gave a reluctant nod to the guards, who, under my notice, had already chained the prisoner to his chair, and they left the room, locking the door behind them. It took me a few minutes to readjust my thoughts before I remembered that I was supposed to question the boy.

"Prison scum" I spat, at the boy, who didn't even break a sweat as he stared at me with those unblinking eyes. "I'll give you 15 minutes to explain your story. That's generous. So be grateful. And think about what you say; it could be the difference between life and death."

For what seemed like hours he just stared at me with that piercing, honest gaze that made me think of a child who had stolen a cookie. But this was a criminal destined to be convicted for murder, not an innocent child who doesn't know of wrong-doings.

Finally, he cleared his throat and began to speak. "It wasn't me. But I know who it was." I was startled into silence for a moment. It wasn't his words, but the way he delivered them, with such confidence and intensity, that made me pause.

"Elaborate," I demanded, "and I don't want any lies." The prisoner simply nodded.

"It started like many nights prior," boy began. "The only thing out of sorts was the skies, which seemed to be crying in advance for the blood that was to be shed later that night."

Thank you again,
Paige M.