

DEATH INTO DIAMONDS

Written by

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INT. HOTEL - NIGHT

A lady is sitting in a hotel lobby reading a book. A man enters the lobby. He doesn't notice her. He is writing in a journal.

CONNOR

(talking to himself)

As I gazed at my ghostly reflection in the spider web-veiled window of my hotel room, I felt like I was trapped in a tangled web of deception.

She looks up from her book.

JEWEL

What? Were you speaking to me?

CONNOR

No, I was just recording something in my journal.

JEWEL

Oh? You are keeping a journal?

He sits down in a chair next to her.

CONNOR

It is a grief journal.

JEWEL

A grief journal?

CONNOR

I am recording my journey through grief.

JEWEL

You have suffered a loss?

CONNOR

I am grieving the loss of a loved one.

JEWEL

I am sorry for your loss.

CONNOR

Thank you.

JEWEL

Keeping a journal should be helpful.

CONNOR

I have been feeling unsupported in my grief.

JEWEL

You don't have friends or relatives who are giving you emotional support in your time of need?

CONNOR

No. I feel trapped, lost, alone and empty.

JEWEL

I was just reading about the subject of grief.

CONNOR

Oh? Is the subject of grief of interest to you?

JEWEL

I have been grieving myself.

CONNOR

You have had a loss?

JEWEL

My parents passed away recently.

CONNOR

I am sorry to hear that.

JEWEL

My parents used to say that I had a sparkling personality. Jewels sparkle and they named me Jewel.

CONNOR

My name is Connor. Maybe you given that name because you have emerald eyes and ruby lips?

JEWEL

They said that I was a gem and their treasure.

CONNOR

They were dazzled by your radiance.

JEWEL
You are a charmer.

CONNOR
I was just pointing out the obvious.

JEWEL
I am sad that they died.

CONNOR
You must miss them.

JEWEL
I miss them every day.

CONNOR
Was they in poor health or in an accident?

JEWEL
They killed themselves.

CONNOR
Oh?

JEWEL
They left a note explaining why he did it.

CONNOR
Why did they do it?

JEWEL
They were wronged by someone they trusted.

CONNOR
They trusted the wrong person?

JEWEL
You have to be careful who you trust nowadays.

CONNOR
I agree.

JEWEL
My parents were swindled out of their life savings.

CONNOR
They lost it all?

JEWEL

They lost it all and so they took their own lives.

CONNOR

That is terrible.

JEWEL

My parents had consulted me before they invested their money.

CONNOR

What did you tell them?

JEWEL

I said that it sounded like a sound investment to me. I was wrong. I can see now that it was another get-rich-quick scheme.

CONNOR

You gave them your opinion.

JEWEL

My judgement was poor. It was based upon my very limited life experience. I didn't suspect guile in others.

CONNOR

You shouldn't blame yourself.

JEWEL

That slick huckster swindled my parents and drove them to suicide. I want him to be caught. He should be brought to justice. I wish I could see my parents righted.

CONNOR

Maybe you will someday.

JEWEL

I hope he gets what he deserves.

CONNOR

I hope so too.

JEWEL

I have been grieving since they died.

CONNOR
I am sorry for your loss.

JEWEL
Thank you.

CONNOR
So we both have been grieving.

JEWEL
I have been unsupported in my grief too.

CONNOR
It is tough grieving without getting the help you need.

JEWEL
There are grief support groups.

CONNOR
People who grieve can help support each other.

JEWEL
Maybe I should make a journal of my journey through grief too.

CONNOR
It has helped me to make it through each day.

JEWEL
So it is working well for you?

CONNOR
Yes, and you might find it helpful too.

JEWEL
I read about grief journals.

CONNOR
Oh?

JEWEL
I have been unsupported in my grief so I have been studying about it.

CONNOR
Really?

JEWEL

This book is about grief.

CONNOR

Has your book been helpful?

JEWEL

Yes, and I have learned some things that may be helpful to you.

CONNOR

Helpful to me?

JEWEL

Perhaps you could share your grief and I could share what I think might apply to your situation.

CONNOR

You could provide me with some grief support?

JEWEL

It might help to heal both of us.

CONNOR

When would you have time to do that?

JEWEL

I have some time right now.

CONNOR

Right now?

JEWEL

Yes.

CONNOR

I have some time available now.

JEWEL

Then we can try it.

CONNOR

I would appreciate that.

JEWEL

Maybe you could write down anything I share that interests you.

CONNOR

Maybe I can. I think I will
remember anything that I can use to
lessen my sorrow.

JEWEL

Maybe taking some notes will help
you remember what you learn.

CONNOR

Maybe it will.

They pause and glance around briefly.

JEWEL

This is a nice hotel.

CONNOR

It is nice.

JEWEL

I don't think they have an
elevator.

CONNOR

It is only two stories.

JEWEL

I suppose people who have trouble
walking are put on the first floor.

CONNOR

That makes sense.

JEWEL

I noticed a cat in the parking lot.

CONNOR

A stray cat?

JEWEL

I felt sorry for it so I brought it
inside and to my room.

CONNOR

That was kind of you.

JEWEL

The manager noticed it and added a
charge to my hotel bill for having
a pet.

CONNOR
I don't think he should have done
that.

Pause

JEWEL
This hotel has a nice lobby.

CONNOR
It is nice.

JEWEL
The lobby isn't too light or dark.
The lights are mellow and make it
easy to read.

CONNOR
Even a dim bulb is bright in a dark
room.

JEWEL
The lights aren't too bright.

CONNOR
Perhaps what you are reading will
illuminate the darkness of
ignorance with the bright light of
truth.

JEWEL
I can see well enough to read.

CONNOR
I can see well enough to write in
my journal.

JEWEL
The chairs are nice.

CONNOR
They are nice.

JEWEL
They are comfortable.

CONNOR
I am comfortable talking with you.

JEWEL
Hopefully you will find light and
comfort in your time of grief.

CONNOR
I hope we both find comfort.

JEWEL
I hope so too.

CONNOR
Do you have a photograph of your
departed parents?

JEWEL
Yes, I can show it to you if I can
find it. (She looks in her purse.)
Oh, I will show you later.

CONNOR
That's okay.

JEWEL
Do you have a photograph of your
lost love one?

CONNOR
Yes, I do.

He reaches in his pocket and takes out a photograph.

CONNOR (CONT'D)

Here is a photograph of us
together.

JEWEL
She looks very happy being with
you. What was her name?

CONNOR
Her name was Misty. This morning
was misty.

JEWEL
It was a misty morning.

CONNOR
This morning I was mourning for
Misty.

He puts the photograph away.

JEWEL
Would you like to tell me more
about her?

CONNOR

I can't talk about her without feeling overwhelmed by the pain of loss.

JEWEL

Maybe someday you will feel better and be able to talk about her. Why don't you tell me how things have been going for you after her death.

CONNOR

I was at the cemetery today.

JEWEL

You were at the cemetery?

CONNOR

When I entered the graveyard, the old iron graveyard gate swung upon rusty hinges creaking like the joints between old bones. I could see, through the barren branches of trees, the blank pale face of the full moon. It was peeking down at me, thinly veiled behind a passing cloud curtain. The old crumbling moss-encrusted tombstones jutting out thru the mist were like seaweed-covered gray rocks on the edge of a calm sea. I lost the feeling of being on land and I drifted aimlessly lost upon a soft and silent sea of fog with no stars to guide me.

Suddenly, I heard the sound of approaching footsteps and a twig snapping behind me. I turned quickly around and what did I see? What did I see?... I saw nothing and no one. I did not meet a soul. I was quiet alone, hiding from myself in the fog, where things looked and sounded unreal. I stood still and listened. There was only an eerie silence as I stood like an actor on a stage in an empty theatre in the white hot spotlight of the moon. I could only see a few feet ahead as I continued to wander.

(MORE)

CONNOR (CONT'D)

In the fog, I was trying to find the grave of my lost loved one. By the light of the moon I could see and read the forgotten names written on tombstones. Many had lived long lives and then died long before I was born. Others had died more recently and their loved ones had laid fresh fragrant flowers upon their graves. The flowers, now dead and dry, poked their withered grave faces up through the mist like phantoms in the fog as if to see who disturbed their peaceful rest.

I turned around briefly and noticed a mysterious figure in the distance. Perhaps he was a ghost lost in the fog. Perhaps he was someone lost to history. Perhaps he was a long-lost drowned sailor who went down with his ship into the salty sea. Perhaps as cold water filled his lungs as he gasped for breath, he thought of something he meant to do when he had the time. For him, time would be no more. Perhaps the sound of water in his ears was like mermaids wreathed with reddish-brown seaweed singing a sad song to him. As a watery ghost, maybe he had lingered far down beneath the waves. Maybe he had walked on the sea floor past sunken wrecks of ships. Perhaps his skeleton lies near sunken treasure. Perhaps glittering golden coins and dazzling colorful gems litter the sea floor around his white bones. Perhaps diamonds have replaced the eyes in his skull and they sparkle. If not, then perhaps pearls have replaced the eyes in his skull, and, like one with cataracts, everything looks hazy and foggy. Walking in the fog is like walking on the bottom of the sea. Perhaps he had wandered up from the sea bottom to the shore--where the sea and fog seem part of each other and now he is a part of them both.

(MORE)

CONNOR (CONT'D)
Perhaps he was a ghost lost in the
fog and the fog was lost in him.

Pause

JEWEL
I was at the cemetery recently.

CONNOR
You were visiting your parent's
graves.

JEWEL
I told them that I was sorry and
that I would see them righted.

CONNOR
Oh?

JEWEL
I saw a woman there?

CONNOR
Was she grieving also?

JEWEL
I don't think so.

CONNOR
What was she doing?

JEWEL
She was cleaning the gravestones.

CONNOR
Does she just go there and start
cleaning them?

JEWEL
She said that she always gets
permission from the families of the
departed first.

CONNOR
Did you watch her clean a
tombstone?

JEWEL
Yes, she scraped away the moss.
Then she used a soft brush to
remove the dirt. She applied some
cleaning solution. She then rinsed
it with water.

CONNOR

Does she work there?

JEWEL

She told me she was a volunteer.
She has been doing it for a few
years. She makes the gravestones
shine and sparkle.

CONNOR

That is nice of her to do that.

JEWEL

And you also went to the jewelry
store?

CONNOR

Yes, after I visited the grave of
my friend, I went from the cemetery
to a jewelry store.

JEWEL

Why did you go to the jewelry
store?

CONNOR

I find some relief from my sorrows
by looking at the dazzling
diamonds.

JEWEL

Looking at diamonds helps to heal
you? Do they give you a warm
feeling inside?

CONNOR

A jewel cannot warm even though it
sparks and burns with a fierce
fire.

JEWEL

Diamonds look like chips of ice.

CONNOR

After I left the jewelry store I
went to this hotel.

JEWEL

You must have a scenic drive.

CONNOR

Yes, there are many trees. The
leaves are changing colors.

(MORE)

CONNOR (CONT'D)

Leaves change from green to red and yellow before they fall to the ground to be trodden black beneath heavy steel-toed boots.

JEWEL

There is wildlife around here.

CONNOR

As I was leaving the cemetery, I saw an owl flying low ahead of me as if leading the way.

JEWEL

That must have been interesting.

CONNOR

Driving here, I almost had an accident.

JEWEL

You almost hit another car?

CONNOR

I almost hit another deer. It ran out in front of me as I was driving. I had to slam on my brakes to avoid hitting it.

JEWEL

You could have been hurt or killed.

CONNOR

I am glad I missed it.

JEWEL

There are a lot of deer in this area.

CONNOR

There aren't many deer like this deer.

JEWEL

What do you mean?

CONNOR

It was a white deer.

JEWEL

You mean a whitetail deer?

CONNOR

It was a white whitetail deer.

JEWEL

What do you mean?

CONNOR

The deer was completely white.

JEWEL

It was an albino?

CONNOR

Yes, it was an albino.

JEWEL

That must be rare.

CONNOR

I have seen many deer, but never I saw an albino deer before.

JEWEL

I have never seen one.

CONNOR

It looked like a the ghost of a deer.

JEWEL

I wonder if albino deer live very long.

CONNOR

I think during the winter they would blend in and be concealed from predators.

JEWEL

Obviously, being totally white year-round would make concealment in most deer habitat difficult.

CONNOR

I was able to see the white deer clearly and so I was able to miss hitting it.

JEWEL

I hit a deer.

CONNOR

Was it an albino deer?

JEWEL

No, it wasn't.

CONNOR
You hit a white-tail deer?

JEWEL
I was driving and a deer ran out in front of me and I hit it.

CONNOR
But you weren't hurt?

JEWEL
Fortunately I wasn't hurt.

CONNOR
I'm glad of that.

JEWEL
The deer was hurt.

CONNOR
I'm not glad of that.

JEWEL
I watched it die.

CONNOR
You saw the deer die?

JEWEL
(Sadly)
I got out of my car and walked over to it. It looked at me and then closed its big brown eyes for the last time.

CONNOR
It wasn't your fault that it died.

JEWEL
Whose fault was it?

CONNOR
No one is to blame.

JEWEL
I felt sorry for it.

CONNOR
It was an accident.

JEWEL
I guess death is sometimes nearer than people realize.

CONNOR

Deer are a real menace around this area.

JEWEL

There are many deer here.

CONNOR

Was your car damaged?

JEWEL

Yes, I am staying at the hotel while my car is being repaired.

CONNOR

My special friend hit a deer.

JEWEL

Your friend hit a deer?

CONNOR

That is how she died.

JEWEL

That is tragic.

CONNOR

It was a foggy morning when she died.

JEWEL

With reduced visibility, it is more challenging to drive in the fog.

CONNOR

It is easier to hit a deer when it is foggy out.

JEWEL

It is a good thing for you that it wasn't foggy when you were driving.

CONNOR

The fog lifted shortly after I left the cemetery while I was at the jewelry store.

JEWEL

If it had been foggy you might have hit a white deer. I think a white deer would blend in with the fog.

CONNOR

Oh, I would have hit it for certain, if it had been foggy. Maybe I would have died like my dear lost special friend. Maybe my sprit would be lost in the fog. Perhaps her sprit is lost in the fog.

JEWEL

A ghost lost in the fog?

CONNOR

Maybe the fog is filled with phantoms.

JEWEL

Why would you think that?

CONNOR

Since she died I feel like I am lost and my mind is in a fog. I feel as if I am lost and left to wander all alone in a phantom-filled fog.

JEWEL

Maybe your incident with the deer reminded you of your friend's death.

CONNOR

Yes, it did and I miss her.

JEWEL

You get reminded of her and you miss her.

CONNOR

I have been alone without her. She was my constant companion. I have been isolated.

JEWEL

You don't have to be alone.

CONNOR

What do you mean?

JEWEL

You could get into another relationship.

CONNOR

I am not ready for that I feel
alone even when I am with others.

JEWEL

You really miss your special
friend?

CONNOR

I miss her terribly.

JEWEL

That is understandable.

CONNOR

You understand why I miss her?

JEWEL

The death of a loved one is the
most devastating loss one can
endure.

CONNOR

I feel sorry for her.

JEWEL

It is sad that she died.

CONNOR

It was unfair that she died.

JEWEL

Conner, many unfair things happen
in life.

CONNOR

I wish that she didn't die.

JEWEL

That is also understandable.

CONNOR

I wish that I could see her again
and talk with her.

JEWEL

What would you say to her?

CONNOR

I didn't get a chance to tell her
goodbye. I would like to at least
tell her goodbye.

JEWEL

It must be difficult for you. What is it like for you?

CONNOR

Jewel, I have been hurting and I feel pressure.

JEWEL

You feel stressed out?

CONNOR

There has been a lot of pressure on me since she died.

JEWEL

From what?

CONNOR

People ask me "when am you going to get over it and get on with my life?"

JEWEL

Our society has unrealistic expectations for those who have experienced a major loss.

CONNOR

I don't know how to "get over it".

JEWEL

You don't get over grief, You absorb you loss and learn from it.

CONNOR

I have been avoided by others.

JEWEL

Your pain makes others feel uncomfortable

CONNOR

I have been under a lot of pressure. I sometimes feel overwhelmed and threatened. I had more pressures where I live and at work.

JEWEL

Oh, so in addition to stress from your grief, you are in some stressful situations. That is terrible. How did that affect you?

CONNOR

I have gotten some terrible stress headaches.

JEWEL

So people put more pressure on you?

CONNOR

I have even had pressure to stop grieving.

JEWEL

Why is that?

CONNOR

People are uncomfortable with my pain.

JEWEL

It seems that you didn't get grief support and got pressure instead.

CONNOR

Yes, I have been very hurt and also I have had to deal with pressure.

JEWEL

You know, pressure makes diamonds.

CONNOR

What do you mean?

JEWEL

I mean a lump of coal is buried in the cold, deep darkness of the earth. Pressure turns it into a diamond.

CONNOR

Do you think that all this pressure could be of value to me and make me like a diamond?

JEWEL

I think you could sparkle like one.

CONNOR

Like the diamonds in the jewelry store.

JEWEL

Yes.

CONNOR
Let me think about that.

JEWEL
Maybe the thought of it will help
you feel better.

CONNOR
When my special friend died, I felt
like I died.

JEWEL
You don't feel alive?

CONNOR
I feel like I was buried.

JEWEL
Buried like a lump of coal beneath
the earth?

CONNOR
I have felt buried beneath my
problems. My sorrows have been
deep. I also feel weighed down by
grief.

JEWEL
You feel like you were buried?

CONNOR
I feel like I was buried alive.

JEWEL
Buried alive?

CONNOR
I feel like I was buried alive and
I died.

JEWEL
You feel dead inside?

CONNOR
Yes, and I felt like I am a ghost.

JEWEL
You felt like you were buried alive
and you died and are a now a ghost.

CONNOR
That's how I feel.

JEWEL

So in your grief you feel like you are buried?

CONNOR

I had once read about a man who was driving home. A large sinkhole beneath the street suddenly opened and it swallowed his car.

JEWEL

Was he hurt?

CONNOR

He was uninjured but he was dazed and confused. He didn't know for a while where he was or what had happened to him.

JEWEL

That would be disturbing.

CONNOR

On a sunny day, he was driving along in his neighborhood and suddenly he was at the bottom of a dark and deep hole with dirt caving in on him.

JEWEL

He must have really felt like he was buried alive.

CONNOR

That is sort of what it was like for me when my love one died.

JEWEL

What do you mean?

CONNOR

I mean that one minute my loved one was alive, and the next—she was gone.

JEWEL

And your world came crashing in?

CONNOR

And it left me feeling dazed and confused.

JEWEL

And you feel buried alive?

CONNOR
Yes, I also have another reason for
feeling buried alive.

JEWEL
Tell me about it.

CONNOR
I moved away after she died.

JEWEL
You moved?

CONNOR
I needed to get away.

JEWEL
Why?

CONNOR
Everything in my neighborhood
reminded me of her.

JEWEL
What do you mean?

CONNOR
For example, I would drive by a
restaurant where we used to eat,
and be reminded of her and feel
upset.

JEWEL
You couldn't be reminded without
feeling pain.

CONNOR
I also wanted to move close to
where she was buried.

JEWEL
You said you have been to the
cemetery.

CONNOR
Yes, I went there to pay my
respects and to put flowers on her
grave.

JEWEL
That is thoughtful of you.

CONNOR

I wish I had given her more flowers
when she was alive.

JEWEL

So you moved, but why did you feel
buried?

CONNOR

I didn't have much money so I
rented the only place I could find
that I could afford.

JEWEL

Where was that?

CONNOR

A woman was renting out part of her
home. I rented out part of her
basement.

JEWEL

Part of her basement?

CONNOR

I lived alone in a cold, dark,
damp, and dusty basement that was
infested with spiders and mice.

JEWEL

How did that make you feel?

CONNOR

I felt stuck in a rut and trapped
there. I was so exhausted from
grief and work that it was hard for
me to escape. I felt like I was
kept in a crypt in a graveyard. I
was always tired but had trouble
sleeping there. I could not rest
in peace.

JEWEL

That must have been unpleasant.

CONNOR

It was unpleasant.

JEWEL

So you have felt buried alive
because you had been living in a
basement?

CONNOR
That is the way I felt down there.

JEWEL
Tell me more about it.

CONNOR
I mentioned that it was cold.

JEWEL
Yes.

CONNOR
There is a bathroom down in the basement, but there is only cold water.

JEWEL
That would be uncomfortable.

CONNOR
I talked to the landlady. (She is not a lady. She is far from it. She is extremely rude, obnoxious, and mean.) I asked her to have it repaired down there so I would have hot water too, but she would not do it.

JEWEL
That would be unfair.

CONNOR
You've heard of my fair lady. She is my unfair landlady.

JEWEL
She seems unfair.

CONNOR
I think that it was unfair for her not to improve the plumbing; the water was rusty and unsafe to drink.

JEWEL
You need clean water.

CONNOR
It was especially cold in the basement during the winter.

JEWEL

That isn't a healthy situation.

CONNOR

It was easy to get sick and catch a cold in a drafty, dusty, and cold basement.

JEWEL

How did you try to keep warm?

CONNOR

I bought a small electric heater.

JEWEL

Did that help?

CONNOR

Even with the heater, it was very cold but it did help a little bit.

JEWEL

That is something.

CONNOR

Unfortunately, my landlady would sneak down the stairs and sometimes unplug it when my back was turned.

JEWEL

Why did she do that?

CONNOR

She claimed that it could start a fire because it is a dusty basement.

JEWEL

You said that it was dusty down there.

CONNOR

Yes, and it was hard to breath down there. Sometimes the dust would make me sneeze. I would try to dust things off the best I could. I would vacuum down there. I think dust would come in from the garage also.

JEWEL

I don't think dust down there would start a fire.

CONNOR

I didn't think so either.

JEWEL

You would think it would be in her best interest to have heat in the basement to keep the pipes from freezing.

CONNOR

I don't think she does a lot of thinking; she acts against her own best interests.

JEWEL

It seems to me that she is mean-spirited and enjoys harming others.

CONNOR

I know what you mean.

JEWEL

Despite her efforts, you survived. What else did you do to keep warm?

CONNOR

I bought an electric blanket.

JEWEL

How did that work out for you?

CONNOR

I think it kept me from freezing to death during the long bleak winter.

JEWEL

That is good. Why else did you feel like you were buried?

CONNOR

It was dark down there.

JEWEL

It was a dark basement?

CONNOR

It was poorly lit down there.

JEWEL

Were there any windows?

CONNOR

There was a small window near the ceiling.

(MORE)

CONNOR (CONT'D)

A little sunlight would shine down
somedays. In this part of the
county there are long winters.
During the spring and summer, it is
often cloudy.

JEWEL

I know what you mean.

CONNOR

I work at night.

JEWEL

What is your job?

CONNOR

I work in security, which can be
stressful. When I get up and leave
for work during the fall and
winter, it is dark. When I drive
back it is dark. I am sleeping
during the day when it is light. I
dwelt among the creatures of the
night. When I patrol outside, I
see bats. I almost feel like a
vampire and never seeing the sun.

JEWEL

You need more sunlight.

CONNOR

I used to go to the park with my
special friend. We would look at
the sunlight reflected on the water
of a lake. It would sparkle like
diamonds.

JEWEL

Oh? Why?

CONNOR

She used to light up my life.

JEWEL

She brightened your days?

CONNOR

And she would brighten my nights.
We would sit out under the stars.

JEWEL

You miss that, don't you?

CONNOR
Things have been dark without her.

JEWEL
And your basement was dark?

CONNOR
Even with the few dim electric
lights, it was still rather dark
down in the basement.

JEWEL
That would be depressing to be in
the dark so much.

CONNOR
I was sad to be kept in the dark so
much.

JEWEL
That would be a sad situation.

CONNOR
It was also damp down there.

JEWEL
It was damp?

CONNOR
My possessions mostly consist of
papers in files and books.

JEWEL
The dampness would be harmful to
them.

CONNOR
Yes, also there may be have been
some mold down there.

JEWEL
That could have made you very sick.

CONNOR
It was sickening being down there.
I often felt sick down there.

JEWEL
I can see how living down there
would make your sick. That must
have been tough for you.

CONNOR
I was having a tough time.

JEWEL

You said that there were spiders
down there.

CONNOR

It was infested with spiders.

JEWEL

I dislike spiders. I think they
are creepy.

CONNOR

I would be reading a book and a
spider would come down on a single
strand of webbing right in front of
my face.

JEWEL

That would be unnerving.

CONNOR

They would be all over the
basement.

JEWEL

What did you do?

CONNOR

I would kill them. I would take a
napkin and crush them with it and
throw it away.

JEWEL

Did you kill many spiders?

CONNOR

I killed countless spiders. I
killed spiders everyday.

JEWEL

Were you able to kill them all?

CONNOR

No, there were too many to kill.

JEWEL

That must have been creepy down there
with all the spiders.

CONNOR

Yes, I bought sort of a little tent made of netting to cover my bed when I sleep to protect me.

JEWEL

What kind of spider was it?

CONNOR

I don't know. It was some kind of common house spider.

JEWEL

So they weren't as big as a tarantula?

CONNOR

No, they are much smaller. I once knew a fellow who owned a pet tarantula.

JEWEL

He had a big spider as a pet?

CONNOR

He didn't treat it well.

JEWEL

He was mean to it?

CONNOR

He would tap on the side of the glass container where he kept it. He would poke at it with a pencil and it would hiss at him.

JEWEL

Really?

CONNOR

I think if you have a pet tarantula, you want a happy tarantula.

JEWEL

I think you are right about that.

CONNOR

Once I found a large snake in the garage.

JEWEL

So you had spiders and snakes.

CONNOR

One time I went in the garage and I thought it was the snake again, but it was just its skin.

JEWEL

Oh, the snake had shed its skin.

CONNOR

The basement was also infested with mice.

JEWEL

That would be bad.

CONNOR

I could often hear them scampering in the walls while I was trying to sleep.

JEWEL

That would make it hard to get enough sleep.

CONNOR

I have a caught many mice in a mousetrap.

JEWEL

What did you use for bait?

CONNOR

I used peanut butter.

JEWEL

I thought mice liked cheese. Mice must also like peanut butter.

CONNOR

They focus on the bait and not the trap.

JEWEL

You felt trapped in your situation?

CONNOR

Yes, and for a long time, I struggled and I couldn't see a way out.

JEWEL

You didn't like killing the spiders and mice, did you?

CONNOR

No, but I had to do it. I had a mousetrap inside, but my landlady put rat traps outside?

JEWEL

Outside? Why would she do that?

CONNOR

Well, my special friend appreciated nature. She was a natural beauty. We would take opportunities to connect with the natural world.

JEWEL

What did you two do?

CONNOR

We would have picnics in parks and watch birds, squirrels, and chipmunks. After she died, I would sometimes try to escape from my grief by connecting with nature. When the days were longer, I would get up and try to get a little sunlight. I would sit outside. There were some cute chipmunks that used to frolic, scamper, and play in the yard. I used to feed them peanuts. They were a delight to behold. They would put a smile on my face and give me a break from my grieving.

JEWEL

That is nice that you found something to make you feel a little better.

CONNOR

This did not go unnoticed by my landlady.

JEWEL

What did she do?

CONNOR

She got some rattraps and she put them outside.

JEWEL

Did the chipmunks get caught in the traps?

CONNOR

Yes, she killed the chipmunks.

JEWEL

I can understand killing mice in your basement, but I don't understand killing chipmunks outside. It seems mean-spirited to me.

CONNOR

I guess I was a little mad at the mice for keeping me awake.

JEWEL

At least you didn't let them drive you mad.

CONNOR

When you don't get enough sleep, you can be forgetful and make mistakes.

JEWEL

Can you think of an example?

CONNOR

I had a small wastepaper basket. I lined it with plastic grocery bags. I threw out the dead mice into it. I took the trash bags and set it in the concrete stairwell between the basement and garage. They would pick up the garbage at the end of the driveway. There was a long U-shaped driveway. Once I found a dead mouse in the driveway by the garage.

JEWEL

The mouse was dead and in lying the driveway?

CONNOR

My landlady had run over it and flattened it out. On my way to work, I would put the garbage bags in the back seat of my car. I would drive down the long driveway. When you are tired, it is easy to be forgetful.

(MORE)

CONNOR (CONT'D)

Sometimes I would forget to take the garbage out of the backseat and dump it into the large garbage can located at the end of the driveway.

JEWEL

So you were focused on getting to work on time and so distracted that you would forget about the garbage?

CONNOR

I would drive about 20 miles to get to work. I work as a security guard. I would work a 12 hour shift. When I got off of work and would get into my car, I would notice the bags of garbage in the back seat. I would then drive back and finally throw away the garbage into the bin at the end of the driveway. I guess I was taking the garbage for ride.

JEWEL

I think you are right that people get forgetful and make mistakes when tired.

CONNOR

People can even have accidents when tired.

JEWEL

When I hit the deer, I was tired and I wasn't as alert as I could have been. I didn't respond as quickly as I would have even if I had more energy.

CONNOR

Jewel, I am constantly tired and have little energy.

JEWEL

Grief is hard work and uses up a lot of energy.

CONNOR

I work at night. It can be tiring staying up all night.

JEWEL

I imagine it would be easy to fall asleep.

CONNOR

I have a lot of responsibility as a security officer and it is important to stay awake and to be vigilant. People depend on me protect their lives and property so I feel pressure working there.

JEWEL

I can understand how that could be a stressful line of work.

CONNOR

There are some plants and flowers outside of the building that I guard. After a summer rain, the lavender was covered with raindrops. There are lights in the parking lot. In that light the raindrops sparkled like diamonds. In my deep grief, I would find a little relief by looking at them.

JEWEL

I am glad you found some relief by looking at something that sparkled. What do you do at your job?

CONNOR

I monitor security cameras.

JEWEL

That could cause eye strain.

CONNOR

I also go on patrols. I walk around a large building. I walk up and down steps. I walk around the building and parking lot.

JEWEL

That could tire a person out.

CONNOR

I have been feeling worn out.

JEWEL

It sounds like you have been sleep-deprived.

CONNOR

At work I would sometimes daydream about sleep. When I would sleep, I would dream about work.

JEWEL

Your life seems like it was a nightmare.

CONNOR

I would have trouble sleeping.

JEWEL

You mentioned the mice making noise in the walls. What else kept you awake?

CONNOR

I would get back from working all night. I would try to sleep. Sometimes I would fall asleep only to be waken up by my landlady making noise. It would be hard for me to get back to sleep. The kitchen of the house is right above my room in the basement. She would get up and be walking around. She would pace back and forth. The sound of her footsteps would keep me awake as I lied in my bed trying to sleep.

JEWEL

And that also made you feel buried?

CONNOR

I felt like I was buried and someone was walking on my grave.

JEWEL

So you were unable to rest in peace.

CONNOR

As if that weren't bad enough, my landlady had a pet that would make noise and disturb my sleep.

JEWEL

What kind of pet?

CONNOR

My landlady had a dog.

JEWEL

Did the dog have a name?

CONNOR

I think its name was shadow. It followed her around like a shadow. It was a big black mutt. It was completely black except for its eyes, which were white.

JEWEL

The dogs eyes were white?

CONNOR

The dog had cataracts.

JEWEL

I have seen seeing eye dogs, but not dogs who have trouble seeing.

CONNOR

My blood was chilled whenever I gazed into its pale eyes.

JEWEL

That dog would look creepy.

CONNOR

The dog wore a bandana around its neck.

JEWEL

What color was it?

CONNOR

It was red-blood red.

JEWEL

The color of the bandana was blood red?

CONNOR

It looked like a blood-soaked bandage.

JEWEL

You say that the dog kept you awake too?

CONNOR

My landlady would talk to the dog.

JEWEL

Do you mean she would tell it to sit and roll over?

CONNOR

No, I never saw the dog do any tricks.

JEWEL

But you said she talked to the dog.

CONNOR

She would have long and loud nonsensical one-sided conversations with it.

JEWEL

That would be strange.

CONNOR

When she ate breakfast, while I was trying to sleep after working all night, the dog would bark and bark and bark as if asking for food.

JEWEL

It would be hard to sleep while a dog is barking on the floor above you.

CONNOR

The dog would also beat its tail on the floor. The sound would reverberate.

JEWEL

How did that make you feel?

CONNOR

I felt like I was trapped in a drum. The sound of the dog beating of its tail would enter my ears and echo in my mind. The pounding of its tail on the floor would give me a pounding headache. I wished that the dog would be taken to the pound and put to sleep.

JEWEL

That must have made it very difficult or even impossible for you to sleep. I can understand how you were feeling stressed and under pressure.

CONNOR

Yes, also I have been under a lot of financial pressure. The room I rented in the basement was overpriced and I could barely afford it. Also, my landlady made things even more difficult for me.

JEWEL

How did she do that?

CONNOR

She would often come up with schemes to try to get more money out of me.

JEWEL

Like what?

CONNOR

Well, first of all I had to chip in equally on utility bills. For example the house used propane gas to heat it. The basement I rented was unheated, except for my small electric heater, which she kept unplugging. So I was paying to heat the rest of the house which I didn't use.

JEWEL

That would be unfair. What else did she do to get more money out of you?

CONNOR

The driveway was very rough. Once she hired someone to smooth it out and put more gravel on the driveway. She expected me to pitch in equally on it. When I refused, she raised my rent instead.

JEWEL

She raised your rent?

CONNOR

She has raised it a number of times.

JEWEL

How did that make you feel?

CONNOR
It has caused me to feel more
financial pressure.

JEWEL
That would be stressful.

CONNOR
There was an old man who also lived
in the house

JEWEL
Tell me about him.

CONNOR
He was a feeble, undernourished and
neglected old man.

JEWEL
That is sad.

CONNOR
I didn't have much free time, but I
would visit with him when I could.

JEWEL
That must have made a difference to
him.

CONNOR
He would spend most of his time
watching television.

JEWEL
What kind of shows did he watch?

CONNOR
He would mostly watch ghost
stories.

JEWEL
Ghost stories?

CONNOR
There are shows where paranormal
investigators go into haunted
houses looking for ghosts. They
have been popular.

JEWEL
I have seen some.

CONNOR

I would visit with him. I guess I would mostly watch him watching television. I guess I felt sorry for him and didn't think he should be alone so much.

JEWEL

I think you made him feel less lonely.

CONNOR

He would sleep a lot. He was in a more quiet part of the house.

JEWEL

Sleep is important.

CONNOR

He was languishing away. I would try to encourage him to eat more. He would sit in a chair and I would bring him a banana.

JEWEL

He liked bananas?

CONNOR

He would eat half of it and then fall asleep holding it.

JEWEL

Why do you think he was neglected?

CONNOR

I suspect that his relatives wanted him to die so they could get their inheritance.

JEWEL

Really?

CONNOR

Even the landlady, who was no relative, would call him "Dad," in the apparent hopes of being included in his will.

JEWEL

What happened next?

CONNOR

When the old man died, the landlady raised my rent to make up for her lost income.

JEWEL

She raised your rent?

CONNOR

Yes.

JEWEL

That was unfair.

CONNOR

The financial pressures have been a burden to me.

JEWEL

You have been under a lot of pressure since your friend died.

CONNOR

I sometimes get stress headaches; I sometimes feel like my head is in a vise.

JEWEL

I was saying that coal is buried in the cold, dark earth and under pressure. It becomes a diamond. Maybe you can sparkle like a diamond too.

CONNOR

I am beginning to see what you mean.

JEWEL

It must have been difficult living there.

CONNOR

I did not do much living in that basement but I did do a lot of dying there.

JEWEL

I'm sorry for you.

CONNOR

I felt sorry for myself too.

JEWEL

I don't blame you.

CONNOR

Well, I finally came up with an idea to improve my desperate and intolerable situation.

JEWEL

You got an idea?

CONNOR

I do not remember how I first got the idea, but once it entered my mind, it was locked in like a prisoner seeking release from his cell. It rattled around in my brain cells like a skeleton dancing in time to the metallic clanking rhythm of a guard shaking his keys.

JEWEL

You couldn't get those thoughts out of your mind?

CONNOR

The idea was trapped in my mind like the flies in the spiderwebs and like the mice in the traps in my damp, dark, dusty, dismal basement apartment. The idea was trapped like me—languishing day after day in my cold lonely room.

JEWEL

Did you act on your idea?

CONNOR

Yes, I did and you know why: I was tired of not getting enough sleep. I was under much pressure. I was tired of the horrible hag and her creepy dog and so very gradually by degrees—I decided to take the life of the dog, even if it meant having the landlady die of grief for the loss of it.

JEWEL

You felt driven to a desperate act.

CONNOR

You should have seen how I proceeded—with what caution— with what cunning—with what care I wisely went about my business. I was never nicer to the dog than during the time before I was rid of it; I would give it a dog biscuit whenever I went past it.

JEWEL

That was nice of you to give it a treat.

CONNOR

Yes, and it was like I was paying a toll with a treat. I would pat it upon its head and it would wag its tail slapping and rapping it upon the floor. How I hated that noise!

JEWEL

The dog had made it hard for you to sleep.

CONNOR

The dog had seemed intent on disturbing me as I slept. Sometimes it would bark for long periods of time at nothing in particular. Perhaps it heard something we could not see. Perhaps it perceived the ghost of the old man who died. Perhaps the dog's vision was merely cloudy and it could see strange sights with its ghostly eyes and it could see and make things out through the haze.

JEWEL

Perhaps that is possible.

CONNOR

I remember one particular night while the landlady was gone, I was awaked by the dog barking and pounding its tail. I hoped that it would stop and let me sleep, but it continued.

JEWEL

What did you do?

CONNOR

I got out of bed and put on my bathrobe and slippers. I went up the stairs. It was dark. I entered the living room (it seemed more like a dying room than a living room). The room was only lit by a small light on the piano. Next to the light was a photograph of the landlady in an ornate silver frame. The dog walked over to the piano. The dog stood on its hind legs and stretched its paws over the keyboard and it pressed down on random keys. It then tilted its head back and howled mournfully as if singing along to the music it was playing on the piano. It was as if the dog had lost its mistress, and, overflowing with sorrow, it was lamenting her passing. It seemed to be expressing misery mixed with agonizing pain. Although the piano was badly out of tune, it was still interesting and even amusing for a little while. Eventually the novelty of it wore off and it began to be less pleasing.

JEWEL

You got tired of listening to the dog howling?

CONNOR

It soon became downright annoying.

JEWEL

How did you react to that?

CONNOR

I grew increasingly irritated and I slapped the dog.

JEWEL

How did the dog react?

CONNOR

It immediately bit my hand and ran out of the room. I looked at my hand. It was bleeding. Drops of blood fell on the keyboard of the piano.

(MORE)

CONNOR (CONT'D)

It looked as if a teacher told a student to keep practicing and he had played the piano until his fingers bled.

JEWEL

What did you do next?

CONNOR

I looked up at the photograph of the landlady. There was something different about it.

JEWEL

What was different about it?

CONNOR

I noticed that in the picture her eyes were closed. It then fell over and slid across the piano keys. As it was falling, time seemed to slow down, and I reached for it, some blood from my hand dripped upon it. It fell on the floor and the glass in the frame broke. The lightbulb in the lamp then began to flicker and it went out.

JEWEL

I can understand why you disliked her dog.

CONNOR

I'm glad that you understand my point-of-view.

JEWEL

What happened next?

CONNOR

At the beginning of the month, after my meager meal of cheese and crackers, I went to pay the rent for my over-priced room. I emptied my wallet of its contents on the kitchen table. She rapped the sharp yellow nails of her long bony fingers impatiently on the table as I counted the money and paid her the required amount. The money had been very hard for me to earn and very easy to spend.

(MORE)

CONNOR (CONT'D)

She counted the money very carefully, as if afraid that I would cheat her of her ill-gotten gain, before signing a receipt.

JEWEL

She signed a receipt?

CONNOR

I always had her sign a receipt for rent and utilities because she would sometimes attempt to charge me twice (demanding more money from me at a later date) and I needed proof that I had already paid her in full.

JEWEL

Was the landlady poor?

CONNOR

No, she was just greedy.

JEWEL

Her bad behavior contributes to your financial pressure.

CONNOR

After I paid her, she told me something.

JEWEL

What did she tell you?

CONNOR

She told me that she had eaten at a nearby restaurant recently with a neighbor. As she gorged herself on the food, she did begin to choke on it. Her face turned bluish as she gasped for air. By performing the Heimlich maneuver, the neighbor was able to dislodge the food and preserve her life. He pointed out that he saved her life, and was able to eventually persuade her to pay for his inexpensive meal, which consisted of a bowl of thin watery soup. She did with the greatest reluctance.

JEWEL

So she paid for both meals?

CONNOR

Yes, but she refused to pitch in on the tip.

JEWEL

What did you think of that?

CONNOR

I could not help thinking that if only he had merely waited and did nothing and let her choke, she would have passed away and I would have been rid of her and her dog.

JEWEL

She wouldn't be around to keep a dog.

CONNOR

Remember, although the landlady mistreated me, I was mostly troubled by her dog's ghoulisn eyes.

JEWEL

Conner, I think your landlady was a trouble-maker. I think all the grief, sleep depravation and pressure put on you added to your troubles.

CONNOR

I noticed something interesting. She had two small plastic containers of prescription drugs. One was for her and one was for the dog. The one for her was kept on the kitchen table. The one for the dog was kept on a counter in a small plastic basket which contained a variety of small packages of dog treats. She opened one of the containers and took a pill. She said it was for her heart.

JEWEL

She had heart trouble?

CONNOR

I thought she caused me trouble because she was heartless.

(MORE)

CONNOR (CONT'D)

She then opened the other container and took out a pill for the dog. The dog was sick too. She wrapped the pill in a piece of chicken skin and gave it to the dog. I noticed that the pills and containers looked the same--only what was written on the labels were different.

JEWEL

You found that interesting?

CONNOR

Yes, and it gave me an idea on how I could get the upper hand.

JEWEL

What was your idea?

CONNOR

I thought I could switch the pills and then she would take the dog's medicine and the dog would take her's. They were both sick and they would get sicker and sicker and would eventually die.

JEWEL

That seems like a questionable strategy, although you were in an extreme situation. With sleep deprivation driving you to the brink of madness, I can understand how you would be tempted to do it.

CONNOR

As I mentioned earlier the idea was trapped in my mind. It seemed like my only way out. However, something interesting happened the next time I saw her.

JEWEL

What happened?

CONNOR

A few days, I went upstairs to pay another bill. I watched her take a pill and give one to the dog. I noticed that she made a mistake when she put them away. She put the dog's pills on the table.

(MORE)

CONNOR (CONT'D)

She put her pills on the counter in the basket with the dog's treats.

JEWEL

So she switched the pills by accident.

CONNOR

I think she was distracted by me. Also, although she was often scheming, I always found her to be slow-witted. I think her eyesight was also getting worse with age.

JEWEL

Did you point out her mistake to her.

CONNOR

I considered it for a moment and decided against it. I would not save her from herself. I thought she would make the world a better place--by leaving it.

JEWEL

Then what happened?

CONNOR

The health of my landlady and her dog declined rapidly.

JEWEL

They needed their medicine.

CONNOR

They needed to take their own medicine and not each others. One morning, I heard a different rapping sound.

JEWEL

It wasn't the dog rapping its tail?

CONNOR

No, I looked outside and saw the landlady hitting the ground with a shovel. She was patting down the earth.

JEWEL

Why did she do that?

CONNOR

Her dog had died and she had buried it. She then clutched at her heart and fell over.

JEWEL

She must have had a heart-attack. Did you call an ambulance and then rush out to help her?

CONNOR

As a security guard, I had been given some training in first aid. However, I was concerned that she would continue her bad behavior. I wasn't comfortable in helping her.

JEWEL

What were you comfortable doing?

CONNOR

I was comfortable in my bed sleeping. I went back to sleep. When I awoke she was still there. I walked out and noticed that she was dead.

JEWEL

Your former landlady is dead?

CONNOR

Later on, as I mentioned, I went to the cemetery.

JEWEL

I thought you were there to visit the grave of your lost loved one.

CONNOR

I also visited the grave of my former landlady.

JEWEL

Did you pay your respects?

CONNOR

I had been polite, kind and respectful to her during her life but she was rude, cruel and disrespectful to me. When she kept me awake pacing on the floor above me, I felt like she was walking on my grave so I walked on her grave.

JEWEL

The wheel of fortune had turned.

CONNOR

I then visited the grave of my special friend.

JEWEL

You said that you didn't think she could rest in peace until you rest in peace.

CONNOR

I am staying now at this hotel.

JEWEL

You should be able to sleep better here.

CONNOR

I was even offered a part-time job here.

JEWEL

That should help ease some of the financial pressure.

CONNOR

I never had the chance to say goodbye to my friend so that has added to my restlessness. I have something to say now that you may find hard to believe.

JEWEL

I have found your long story hard to believe.

CONNOR

I believe that the ghost of my special friend has followed me from the cemetery to this hotel.

JEWEL

So you think this hotel is haunted. You think her ghost has unfinished business?

CONNOR

I think she is giving me the opportunity to say goodbye.

JEWEL

Do you think that you can somehow contact her?

CONNOR

I mentioned earlier that I saw some paranormal investigators on television. Maybe we can try some experiments to test for a supernatural presence.

Optional: They conduct a seance using some available items. A lightbulb lights by itself. A bell rings by itself. A table floats as if lifted by unseen hands etc.

CONNOR (CONT'D)

I read that people sometimes see ghosts in mirrors. Do you have a pocket mirror with you.

She reaches in her purse and removes a pocket mirror. She looks into it. A ghost appears behind them.

JEWEL

I see a ghost!

He waves to the ghost.

CONNOR

(To MISTY) Goodbye my friend.

The ghost waves goodbye and leaves.

JEWEL

She waved to you.

CONNOR

We said goodbye to each other.

JEWEL

She completed her unfinished business.

CONNOR

Now we both can rest in peace.

JEWEL

In the photograph you showed me, she looked happy. She was happy being with you. You made her happy. I think you can be happy knowing that.

CONNOR

I am allowed to be happy.

JEWEL

Do you feel less pressure now?

CONNOR

I feel as if a heavy weight has
been lifted off of my shoulders

JEWEL

You mentioned that you found some
relief from pressure and some
solace in looking at things that
sparkle. I have something very
valuable to me. I got them from my
parents. I have a pendant. It is
a skull carved from a deer antler.
It has diamond eyes set in gold
sockets.

She hands him a box containing the pendant.

Look at them and see them sparkle,
you may find some relief from your
grief.

CONNOR

The light makes them really
sparkle.

JEWEL

Maybe the light of a new day can
make real tears sparkle too.

He closes the box and hands it to her. She places it in her
purse.

CONNOR

You may want to put your diamond-
eyed skull pendant in your room
safe.

JEWEL

I will do that to keep them safe.

CONNOR

Yes, and I also think I understand
what you said earlier about
pressure making diamonds. I think
that I can finally move on and that
my life can sparkle too.

JEWEL

I believe that your future will be brighter and you will sparkle.

CONNOR

Thank you for listening to me.
Thank you for taking the time to help me.

JEWEL

You are welcome. Those who grieve can help heal each other by listening to their stories. I feel better too.

CONNOR

I am glad that you feel better also. I feel less restless. It is quiet here and I can rest in peace. I think that I will sleep well tonight.

JEWEL

It is getting late and I am tired. I am also going to get some rest.

She stands up.

Have a goodnight Connor.

CONNOR

Goodnight Jewel.

She leaves.

He sits by himself for a little while. The ghost (MISTY) enters. He looks at her.

Pause

She talks aloud to herself.

MISTY

Don't walk on my grave. Let me sleep or I'll give you reasons to weep. Although I'm buried underground, heavy footsteps still make a sound--a sound that echoes in my ears. Shed some tears and be filled with fears. Don't stay listening to the wind blow. You better leave while you can go.

(MORE)

MISTY (CONT'D)

Don't stand above me in the rain or
I will fill your life with pain.
I'll give your reasons to frown. I
will reach up and pull you down.

Pause

She sits down next to him. They sit in silence for a little while.

CONNOR

That was creepy.

MISTY

Did we fool her? Was she deceived?
Did she really think that I was a
ghost? Did the scheme to steal her
diamond-eyed skull pendant work?
Were you able to take it from the
box without her noticing?

He shows her the diamond-eyed skull pendant then puts them in his pocket.

CONNOR

Yes, the plan worked perfectly. It
went as planned. I gained her
sympathy with my sad story and
subtly persuaded her to show me her
pendant. I removed it so smoothly
that I'm sure she doesn't suspect a
thing.

MISTY

So my ghost make-up fooled her?

CONNOR

She thought that you were a real
ghost.

MISTY

How do I look?

CONNOR

You look ghastly--simply ghastly.

MISTY

I usually go as a ghost to
Halloween costume parties.

CONNOR

You were the life of the party?

MISTY

I was the death of the party.

CONNOR

When you were a child did you dress as a ghost when you went trick or treating?

MISTY

Yeah, by dressing as a ghost, I wouldn't wear a mask. It is hard to breath while wearing a mask. It limits your intact of oxygen. It is also harder to see while wearing a mask. It is easy to have an accident. I wouldn't wear a mask because I wanted to be and stay safe. Sometimes I would wear a white sheet and go as a ghost.

CONNOR

I don't think you would have tricked her if you had taken a white sheet off of the bed in your room here and worn it tonight.

MISTY

Your seance magic tricks tricked her.

CONNOR

She thought she made contact with a spirit on the other side but she was really treated to a magical performance.

MISTY

She treated you with kindness and showed you her skull pendant with its eyes of sparkling diamonds.

CONNOR

It was my sparkling wordplay that influenced her to do that.

MISTY

The diamond-eyed skull pendant you took from her must be worth a lot of money.

CONNOR

Yes, it is valuable. The skull pendant is also mysterious.

(MORE)

CONNOR (CONT'D)

Maybe that is why the president of the magic club wants it. I borrowed the magic spirit tricks from some of the members of the magic club. Magicians are mysterious and have many secrets. These magicians even meet in a building which is owned by a secret society. It is fortunate that you found out about the pendant and let me know about it.

MISTY

I'm glad that you were able to con her.

CONNOR

I was able to CONvince her to let me see the pendant so I could sneak it out of the box.

MISTY

You were like a treasure hunter.

CONNOR

The diamond-eyed skull pendant is now my treasure.

MISTY

Can I look at it?

CONNOR

Hold it up to the light to see it really sparkle.

He hands her the skull pendant with diamond eyes. She holds it up to the light.

MISTY

It really sparkles alright. I wish I could keep it.

CONNOR

That would be unwise. You might meet with misfortune if you keep it.

MISTY

It was a team effort getting it.

CONNOR

We will sell it and split the profits equally.

MISTY

Well, it was mine for a few moments.

She hands the pendant back to him.

CONNOR

Enjoy things while you have them.

MISTY

How is it you were able to get her to show you the pendant so you could take it?

CONNOR

When you told me she was grieving I had the idea of gaining her sympathy by pretending that I was grieving myself. Sometimes one hurting person will help another.

MISTY

Connor, she seemed to feel sorry for you.

CONNOR

The story I made up held her attention and distracted her away from my true intention.

MISTY

She didn't suspect it was an elaborate lie told so you could steal her pendant.

CONNOR

The words "lie" and "steal" are harsh words for you to use.

MISTY

What words would you like better?

CONNOR

Let's just say that I used my silver-tongued eloquence in order to creatively acquire them.

MISTY

That does sound better.

CONNOR

I could tell that the weight of that diamond-eyed skull pendant was weighing her down. By lifting it, I made her burden lighter.

MISTY

You make it sound like you were doing her a favor.

CONNOR

It does sound that way, doesn't it?

MISTY

Then don't do me any favors.

CONNOR

My story got her to lower her defenses.

MISTY

She seemed less defensive as she listened to your tall tale.

CONNOR

It was a tall tale about a dog's tail.

MISTY

Tell me, how did you come up with your story?

CONNOR

Well Misty, I could have threatened her and used force to steal her pendant, but that is not my style.

MISTY

That way would also be more dangerous.

CONNOR

I thought I would plant an idea in her unconscious mind--like planting a seed in the ground.

MISTY

So there is a difference between being buried and being planted?

CONNOR

If I had walked up to her asked to see her diamond-eyed skull pendant, she would have said "no" to me.

(MORE)

CONNOR (CONT'D)

So I needed a long sad story. It wore her down and distract her so she would lower her defenses. The theme of my story was pressure makes diamonds.

MISTY

Well, what made you think of that?

CONNOR

I had a brief window of opportunity to get her diamond. I was under pressure to come up with a story.

MISTY

So how did you come up with your story?

CONNOR

I brought a note pad with me to write down some ideas. I wandered around the hotel. I brainstormed and made some observations and jotted down a few ideas. I then made an outline with some bullet points.

MISTY

So your grief journey is really an outline for your story. Tell me more about it.

CONNOR

Okay Misty, I will tell you if it really is of interest to you. I always kept my objective in mind, which was to get her to show me the skull pendant with diamond eyes so I could take it out of the box unnoticed.

MISTY

How did you stay on track?

CONNOR

I imagined her face as a skull with diamond eyes. I would dazzle her with my sparkling wordplay and she would see what she wanted so see and be deceived.

MISTY

You imagined her eyes as diamonds?

CONNOR

If she looked thru her real eyes,
she would realize the real lies.

MISTY

So she just saw what she wanted to
see and not the truth.

CONNOR

Magicians know that people want to
be deceived and so they are
deceived.

MISTY

You think the world wishes to be
deceived?

CONNOR

So it is deceived.

MISTY

People want to be fooled?

CONNOR

It is fun to be fooled.

MISTY

Connor, I wonder if you wish to be
fooled.

CONNOR

It is more fun to be the fooler.

MISTY

Did you ever think of having the
ghost tell her to give you the
skull pendant with diamond eyes?

CONNOR

I thought of that, but I didn't
think she would fall for it. It
was just asking and expecting to
much.

MISTY

It was hard enough to convince her
to let you hold the pendant.

CONNOR

I knew that I could take it if I
held it in my hand under the
pretense of holding them up to the
light to see them sparkle.

MISTY

Wasn't that her idea for you to hold it?

CONNOR

She thought it was her idea.

MISTY

You moved her emotionally so much that she wasn't thinking clearly.

CONNOR

Her thinking wasn't crystal clear so she couldn't see me steal her skull-shaped pendant with its diamond eyes.

MISTY

If she ever finds out she lost her pendant will shed some tears.

CONNOR

I knew that pressure makes diamonds, so I went on and on about being under pressure--weighed down by grief.

JEWEL

So that's why you came up with the idea of using pressure as a theme.

CONNOR

I felt some pressure to steal it. I needed to come up with some story to trick her. Also, I thought that she may feel pressed down by grief.

MISTY

She must be still burdened by grief since she related so well to your story.

CONNOR

Her grief must be as deep as a well.

MISTY

Maybe she has been drowning in grief.

CONNOR

I told her that I found relief from grief by looking at the sunlight sparkling on the water.

MISTY

Maybe she will find relief from her grief by looking at things sparkle too.

CONNOR

She can look at drops of water on flowers sparking in the moonlight. She can look at the sparkling stars.

MISTY

Tears dropping from her eyes would be like teardrop diamonds. Maybe she found some solace from her grief by looking at the sparkling diamonds in her pendant.

CONNOR

So by moving her emotionally with my words I was able to manipulate her mind so she handed it to me. L

MISTY

Okay already. I get it that you used your hypnotic persuasion. I get the diamond references in your story. Diamonds are made under pressure. A lump of coal is alone in the cold, dark earth under pressure. You were like a lump of coal and you now can sparkle like diamonds--like the diamonds in the skull pendant.

CONNOR

Diamonds are polished with friction. I wanted to wear her down with my simple but long story. She had empathy. She went on a journey through grief with me. She experienced an ordeal. The conflict in my story was the friction. The triumph over adversity was the sparkling light that shined through it.

MISTY

What about the deer in your conversation?

CONNOR

I found out that she had hit a deer with her car.

(MORE)

CONNOR (CONT'D)

She is staying at the hotel while her car is being repaired. I thought that she would have empathy with someone dear to me who hit a deer with her car.

MISTY

I can understand that.

CONNOR

Also, I talked to some deer hunters who are staying at the hotel. One of them said he was out all day looking for deer and didn't see any.

MISTY

Not even one?

CONNOR

While driving back to the hotel he hit a deer with his pickup truck.

MISTY

Did you ever hit a deer?

CONNOR

I once hit a deer on a foggy day. The deer emerged from the fog and I didn't have time to come to a complete stop. The deer kicked the hood of my car and put a crimp in it. The deer spun around and fell down on the road. It then got up and ran into the woods.

MISTY

Why didn't you tell her that story?

CONNOR

I didn't think it was exciting enough to hold her attention, capture her imagination, move her emotionally and inspire her to take the action that I desired.

MISTY

So you never saw an albino deer.

CONNOR

I saw a photograph of one in a book. I had another reason for talking about deer.

MISTY

What reason?

CONNOR

The skull pendant is made out of the antler of a deer.

MISTY

That makes sense.

CONNOR

I wanted to plant the idea in her mind of her showing it to me.

MISTY

What about the dog in the story? I How did you come up with that?

CONNOR

I was talking to one of the front desk attendants. He was standing outside smoking a cigarette and coughing. He blamed the pollen in the air for his cough. When I looked in his face I saw that he had a glint in his eyes.

MISTY

A glint in his eyes?

CONNOR

They seemed to sparkle.

MISTY

Like the diamond-eyes in the skull pendant?

CONNOR

Yes, so I asked him about it. He said that he had cataracts and they did surgery and also replaced the lenses in his eyes. Before he required corrective lenses. He wore glasses.

MISTY

At least he doesn't have glass eyes.

CONNOR

He sees fine now.

MISTY

Well, what about the dog?

CONNOR

I'm getting to that. The front desk attendant had a pet dog that died recently.

MISTY

The dog died?

CONNOR

He fellow was eating chicken one day and threw the bones in the garbage. The dog had dug in his garbage and got a chicken bone. He then tried to take it away from the dog.

MISTY

How did the dog react to that?

CONNOR

The dog growled and tried to bite him. The dog then choked on the bone and died.

MISTY

How did he feel about that?

CONNOR

He was sad that it died.

MISTY

The man was acting in the dog's best interests. The dog should have trusted him and dropped the bone.

CONNOR

He showed me a photograph of the dog. The lighting in the picture wasn't right.

MISTY

What was wrong?

CONNOR

There was a glare. The dog's eyes looked white.

MISTY

So that gave you the idea for a dog with white eyes.

CONNOR

Yes, and its foggy and ghostly eyes would get her thinking about ghosts.

MISTY

What about the blood-red bandana worn by the dog that looked like a blood-stained bandage?

CONNOR

I thought it would make her think of blood diamonds and death.

MISTY

Why have her think of death?

CONNOR

She has a skull-shaped pendant and skulls are a symbol of death.

MISTY

What about the dog pounding its tail on the floor above you while you were trying to sleep?

CONNOR

I was getting pounding pressure headache while hearing him telling me a tale about his dog, so I thought I would tell a tale about a dog giving me a headache by pounding its tail.

MISTY

How did you get the idea about the spiders that were in the basement?

CONNOR

Before I entered this hotel, I saw a spider crawling along. I stepped on it. That gave me the idea of me killing spiders.

MISTY

Where did you get the idea for the mice in the basement?

CONNOR

I saw a dead mouse in the parking lot.

MISTY

It was dead?

CONNOR
It had been flattened out.

MISTY
Someone must have run over it.

CONNOR
I think that ran over it.

MISTY
Why do you think that?

CONNOR
It was near my car.

MISTY
Some do harm without even noticing.

CONNOR
I suppose we can all take a closer
look at things.

MISTY
Where did you get the idea for your
story about the garbage bags left
in your car?

CONNOR
When I got to the hotel, I noticed
a garbage bag by the side entrance.
The bag was filled with empty beer
cans. I have a neighbor who
recycles aluminum. I thought of
taking the bag of cans and putting
it into the trunk of my car.

MISTY
Why didn't you do it?

CONNOR
I didn't want my car to smell like
beer.

MISTY
That is understandable.

CONNOR
Also, I don't like my neighbor.

MISTY
What about the owl in your story?

CONNOR

I got the idea of putting a bird in the story because there is an injured bird outside quivering on the pavement. It is dying or dead.

MISTY

I wonder why?

CONNOR

It must have hit that window.

MISTY

Out of all the different types of birds, why did you mention an owl? Have you seen owls around here?

CONNOR

I saw an owl just down the street from here. It was just standing along side of the road. I thought it would be more interesting soaring majestically though the sky.

MISTY

That sounds more interesting.

CONNOR

I thought an owl leading me out of the cemetery would be even more interesting. A owl is a symbol of wisdom. It would be wise to avoid death and choose to drive carefully on the road of life.

MISTY

It's interesting how you were able to make up some story and use it to hypnotically persuade her to do what you wanted.

CONNOR

Misty, perhaps you should go back to your room before someone sees us talking.

She stands up.

MISTY

Well Connor, I am going to take off this ghost make-up and get changed.

She leaves.

Pause

The JEWEL enters and sits down.

JEWEL

I just saw you talking with the ghost.

CONNOR

The ghost came though the mirror near the hallway.

JEWEL

The ghost came through a mirror?

CONNOR

The mirror was a portal to the other side.

JEWEL

What did the ghost want?

CONNOR

The ghost of my departed friend wanted to thank you your compassionate listening which helped me in my grief.

JEWEL

Being a compassionate listener is a privilege.

CONNOR

You think that you are privileged?

JEWEL

It is an honor that you had that kind of trust in me.

CONNOR

Trust?

JEWEL

Yes, you had trust and faith in my sensitivity, humility, judgement and wisdom.

CONNOR

I felt safe sharing with you.

JEWEL

In an unsafe world, you felt safe sharing your story with me and you were willing to receive what I have to share.

CONNOR

I was missing a genuine human connection on a deep level on my journey through grief.

JEWEL

I am glad I was there for you.

CONNOR

I thank you and my departed friend thanks you for your compassionate listening.

JEWEL

Why didn't she appear to me.

CONNOR

She was afraid that she would frighten you with her otherworldly appearance.

JEWEL

She was ghastly and frightening in appearance.

CONNOR

She delivered a message for you from the other side.

JEWEL

I message for me?

CONNOR

The message was from your parents.

JEWEL

A message from my parents?

CONNOR

They say that they are very proud of you. They say not to be sad for them anymore. They say not to blame yourself for what happened.

JEWEL

I have felt guilty thinking I could have prevented their deaths somehow if I had been with them.

CONNOR

They said that it was beyond your control.

JEWEL

It was the fault of the man who swindled them.

CONNOR

Your parents said that people like that get what's coming to them. Don't think of revenge. Just let it go.

JEWEL

It is difficult to do that.

CONNOR

You parents said not to be sad for them anymore. They are at peace and happy.

JEWEL

At peace and happy?

CONNOR

They want you to be at peace and happy too.

JEWEL

How can I be at peace and happy cut off from them.

CONNOR

They said you aren't cut off from them.

JEWEL

What did they mean?

CONNOR

The bond of love between you and them is not broken.

JEWEL

It isn't?

CONNOR

Your bond of love is stronger than death itself. You felt your parent's love before and you still can feel it. You still have a relationship with them. It is just different now.

JEWEL

Wherever they are, I send them love.

CONNOR

They still live on in your memories and in your heart. They are still a loving presence in your life.

JEWEL

They can rest in peace and I can be happy?

CONNOR

You are allowed to be happy. Even without them in your life, you are allowed to be happy. No matter what you have been through while suffering in grief, you are allowed to be happy.

JEWEL

I have been unhappy since they died.

CONNOR

It doesn't help anyone when you are unhappy. It doesn't help your departed loved ones. It doesn't help you. It doesn't help anyone. You are allowed to be happy.

JEWEL

I can't be happy that they died.

CONNOR

You are not happy that they died, but you are allowed to move on with your life and be happy. You don't need to feel guilty for being happy. Being happy doesn't mean that you are losing a piece of your connection with them. They were unhappy and ending their lives but your life doesn't have to end

JEWEL

Their lives had an unhappy ending.

CONNOR

Your story doesn't have to have an unhappy ending too. Thinking about them having been in pain may be too much for you to bear. Trying to absorb the pain of their past in the hopes of them being happy won't work. It will just add more pain in your life without helping them.

JEWEL

I am sad because I care that they died.

CONNOR

Being happy doesn't mean that you don't care that they died. Your lost loved ones wouldn't want you to spend the rest of your life grieving for them and being unhappy. You can have some empathy for those who suffer and still choose to have happiness in your life. You are allowed to be happy. You are allowed to feel joy and light and to sparkle like diamonds.

JEWEL

So I can let it go and be happy.

CONNOR

They say don't be sad for them anymore. You made them happy. They are happy. You should be happy too.

JEWEL

Since my parents are resting in peace, I don't feel like taking revenge. I don't even feel the need to have the swindler brought to justice.

CONNOR

You can just let it all go and move on with your life.

JEWEL

Thank you for giving me their message. I feel as if a heavy burden has been lifted off of me.

(MORE)

JEWEL (CONT'D)

I have felt pressure. Pressure
makes diamonds. I can be happy and
I can sparkle like a diamond.

She leaves.

Pause

MISTY (now without make-up and dressed in regular clothing)
returns and sits next to him.

MISTY

I noticed that you were talking
with the lady again.

CONNOR

She saw me talking with you while
you were wearing your ghost make-
up.

MISTY

What did she think?

CONNOR

She thought I was talking to a
Ghost.

MISTY

I'm glad it fooled her.

CONNOR

Even in this light, your ghost make-
up looked ghostly and ghostly.

MISTY

I hope that I look better now
without it.

CONNOR

Yes, you do.

MISTY

So what did you tell her?

CONNOR

It first I wasn't sure what to do.

MISTY

Things weren't going according to
our plan.

CONNOR

I was surprised to see her. She caught me off guard. She said that she was going to sleep.

MISTY

What did you do?

CONNOR

I told her that the ghost came though the mirror towards the hallway.

MISTY

You said the ghost came though a mirror.

CONNOR

The mirror was a portal to the other side.

MISTY

What else did you say about the ghost?

CONNOR

The ghost told me goodbye.

MISTY

Saying "goodbye" was the ghost's unfinished business.

CONNOR

I said that the ghost was grateful to her for comforting me in my grief and had delivered a message for her from dead parents.

MISTY

From her dead parents?

CONNOR

A message from beyond the grave.

MISTY

What message?

CONNOR

I told her what she wanted to hear.

MISTY

What did she want to hear?

CONNOR

I thought she wanted to hear that her parents were proud of her.

MISTY

How did she react to that?

CONNOR

It lifted her spirits.

MISTY

I can understand that.

CONNOR

A message from the spirits lifted her spirits.

MISTY

What else did you tell her?

CONNOR

I said that she shouldn't blame herself for their deaths.

MISTY

Why would she blame herself?

CONNOR

People who grieve often have regrets and blame themselves whether they deserve it or not.

MISTY

What else did say was in the message from her departed parents?

CONNOR

I said that she shouldn't be sad anymore for them because they are resting in peace.

MISTY

How did she react to that?

CONNOR

I think it made her less sorrowful.

MISTY

Did she believe you?

CONNOR

She believed my story.

MISTY
You tricked her again.

CONNOR
I tricked her.

MISTY
You are very devious.

He takes out a small bottle of sparkling wine.

CONNOR
I have some sparkling wine. We can
have a drink and celebrate our
victory.

MISTY
I hear footsteps.

She leaves

Pause

The JEWEL enters and sits down next to him.

JEWEL
You asked to see a photograph of my
father.

CONNOR
Did you find it?

JEWEL
Yes, I found it. Would you still
like to see it?

CONNOR
You can show it to me.

She hands him a photograph. He looks at it. He looks
startled by what he sees.

JEWEL
Do they look familiar to you?

CONNOR
Should they?

JEWEL
You have seen them before.

CONNOR

Have I?

JEWEL

You are the man who swindled them
out of their life savings.

CONNOR

You think that I swindled them?

JEWEL

You swindled them out of their
money which drove them to kill
themselves.

CONNOR

You blame me for the death of your
parents?

JEWEL

Yes, I do.

CONNOR

I understand that you are upset and
troubled. You have been weighed
down by grief so you are not
thinking clearly.

JEWEL

It is your fault that my parents
are dead.

CONNOR

How can you think such a thing?

JEWEL

You cruelly took away my parents
causing me to shed many tears and
you also took away my diamond-eyed
skull pendant.

She takes the box of her purse and opens it. It is empty.
He takes it from her.

CONNOR

Listen to me. You are tired and
not thinking clearly. Perhaps you
merely misplaced it.

JEWEL

I haven't misplaced it.

CONNOR

People sometimes have things stolen while staying at hotels. Perhaps someone stole it from your room when you were sleeping.

JEWEL

You better return them to me or I will call the police.

CONNOR

You have no proof that I took your diamonds.

JEWEL

The joke is on you. Those weren't real diamonds.

CONNOR

Your diamonds are fake?

JEWEL

Yes, they are as fake as you.

CONNOR

You doubt my sincerity?

JEWEL

You are a phony.

CONNOR

Me?

JEWEL

You are a fraud.

CONNOR

I know you have suffered a terrible loss so you have been troubled and you are not thinking clearly.

JEWEL

My thoughts have been crystal clear.

He closes the box and hands her back to her.

CONNOR

You are half-asleep

JEWEL

I am awake.

CONNOR
You are imagining things.

JEWEL
That's what you think.

CONNOR
Open your box.

She opens the box. The skull pendant is there.

JEWEL
They is back.

CONNOR
They were there all the time.

JEWEL
You put them back.

CONNOR
First you accuse me of taking them
and now you accuse me of returning
them. Make up your mind.

JEWEL
You put them back because you found
out that they weren't real.

CONNOR
I don't blame you for placing a
high value on them and wanting to
keep them safe. I'm sure they have
sentimental value to you.

JEWEL
Sentimental value?

CONNOR
You said you got them from your
parents.

JEWEL
I said that they are from my
parents. I don't mean that they
gave them to me as a gift when they
were alive.

CONNOR
You inherited them?

JEWEL

After my parents died, they were cremated. Their ashes were compressed into diamonds.

CONNOR

You say that their ashes were made into diamonds?

JEWEL

Yes, I was given beauty for ashes. They turned death into diamonds.

CONNOR

Really?

JEWEL

Their spirits are trapped in the diamonds. When I look into one diamond I see the ghost of my mother. When I look into the other, I see the ghost of my father.

CONNOR

When I look into your eyes, despite all the tears you have shed, I can see they are still not dry. Because your eyes are moist with tears, your vision is blurred. You are seeing things that aren't really there.

JEWEL

When I hold it to my ear, I hear their mournful wailings.

CONNOR

You are seeing and hearing things. You think that they are crying out for revenge?

JEWEL

They cannot rest until you are brought to justice.

CONNOR

You think that your pendant is haunted?

JEWEL

Yes.

CONNOR

It is okay for you to lose your money and even your loved ones, but don't lose your mind.

JEWEL

You swindled them. They were too deluded to see the obvious truth and they fell into your trap. Their restless spirits are now trapped in my diamonds.

CONNOR

They are trapped?

JEWEL

Yes Connor, and now you have now fallen into my trap.

CONNOR

What do you mean?

JEWEL

I know the woman who dressed as a ghost?

CONNOR

You don't believe she was a ghost?

JEWEL

I know it.

CONNOR

How do you know it?

JEWEL

You thought she worked for you when she was really working for me. I had her tell you about my pendant. I knew you would be enticed by the diamonds in it. They were the bait for my trap.

She takes out a handgun from her purse and points it at him.

CONNOR

Why are you pointing that gun at me?

JEWEL

I am pointing it at you because I am going to shoot you.

CONNOR
You intend to kill me?

JEWEL
My parents are dead.

CONNOR
I did not kill them.

JEWEL
You drove them to suicide. They
died. You can die too.

CONNOR
Do you mind if I have a drink
before you shoot me.

JEWEL
Go ahead.

CONNOR
I took a risk and so I drink. The
wine sparkles like diamonds.
Instead of merely sipping the
bubbles at the top like many do, I
drank deeply from the cup of life.

He drinks some sparkling wine.

JEWEL
Your life is over.

She fires the gun.

JEWEL (CONT'D)
Bang you are dead.

CONNOR
It wasn't loaded.

JEWEL
I pulled the trigger. I said that
I would shoot you. I didn't say
that I would kill you.

CONNOR
You tricked me.

JEWEL
You tricked my parents and I
tricked you.

CONNOR
You almost scared me to death.

JEWEL

It is almost Halloween which is a time to be scared. It is also a time to be tricked.

CONNOR

Okay Jewel, I admit it. You are right. I swindled your parents. I tried to rob you too. Also, I had poisoned the sparkling wine.

JEWEL

Why did you do that?

CONNOR

I was going to kill my female accomplice and keep all the money for myself.

JEWEL

You would have killed her?

CONNOR

She was going to die and be a real ghost. Now I will die. I thought you were going to kill me so in despair, I drank the poisoned sparkling wine.

JEWEL

You can sparkle too.

CONNOR

It is too late for me.

JEWEL

Conner, it is not too late.

CONNOR

Even though it was poisoned, the wine still sparkled--like diamonds.

JEWEL

You will sparkle like a diamond too. You have killed yourself with the poisoned sparkling wine. When you die, my dead parents can rest in peace. I told you that pressure makes diamonds. You didn't really understand what I meant by it.

CONNOR

What do you mean?

JEWEL

I am going to have your body cremated and have your ashes compressed into a diamond. No tears will be shed for you so I will have your remains made into a teardrop diamond. I will wear it in a pendant as a trophy. Your restless spirit will be trapped in a diamond forever. I can rest in peace too. I can move on with my life. I lost my parents but I found hope for a better tomorrow.

CONNOR

I will make a final entry into my grief journal.

He writes in his book.

CONNOR (CONT'D)

And so in the end I am trapped in my own web of deceit. My worthy opponent played a challenging and dangerous game with a cheater. It was a high-pressure situation, but she got the upper hand. I have lost my life, but I have proved my point about people. They want to be deceived and so they are deceived. I had fooled many others but I wanted someone to finally fool me. I wanted to believe her. A beguiling enchantress has outshined me. I was put under pressure and I will sparkle when she turns my death into diamonds.

He closes his eyes and dies and drops his book. She picks it up and leaves the lobby and lower the lights.

FADE TO BLACK

THE END

