

Crave by Kettera Sergent, Tazewell High School

Adam had not come to school that day. His parents had said they felt it wouldn't be good thing to send to him school so soon after his 'accident' as they called it. Alice hated that they didn't just call it what it was. It was suicide. She walked into the same doors that she had been for the better part of a year. The high school seemed darker and drab today.

Maybe it was because Adam wasn't there yelling about something that he thought was stupid, or it also could have been the fact that there were fliers everywhere saying cheesy things like 'Suicide is not the answer' or 'Call this number for free help.' Alice hated that everyone was acting like it was some kind of lesson.

She walked down the hallway with what felt like a million eyes on her. Everyone would stare, only for a moment, before they forced themselves to look away. Alice glared at everyone who stared a little too long. Adam had tried to end his life. It was now a known fact that everyone was beginning of think about. They would whisper about it behind his back or they would say how much of shame to lose someone like him.

Several people would give her sincere smiles as they passed, but Alice wasn't in the mood for that. She fiddled with the part of her bandage from where she fell the other day. Alice had been running to get to Adam when she had tripped. When she got to her locker a freshman came over to her locker. The girl had brown hair, candy blue eyes, and a fragile frame.

"I'm sorry about Adam, we have theater together." Alice stood watching her for a moment before she spoke.

"Thank you for your sympathy." Her tone was monotonous and rude but the girl just smiled. After a moment of awkward silence the younger girl turned around and walked off. Alice watched her for a moment before sighing and turning back to her locker. She missed Adam. He would have made a joke or said something stupid to make Alice and to just stop thinking so much. But Adam wasn't there, that was the problem. A taller guy stood over to the side of the hallway staring at a poster

"I think he should have died. He's a creep. He stalks like all of the girls around here." The other guy nodded. They stood there laughing and saying insults for a few moments before Alice turned around. She stood and watched them talk for a moment.

"Isn't he like stalking that chick...? Alice, I think that her name?"

"Yeah, he is. Blake said that the other day."

"How did Blake know?"

"Apparently he's friends with Alice or something." Alice started walking towards the two of them at a brisk pace. She stopped just in front of them. Alice had a light smile on her face as the two guys towered over her.

"Would care to mind your own fricking business?" The two guys looked at her for a moment. Both of them held a confused look on their faces.

"Why? He's a creep. That's all I'm saying." Alice gave a forced laugh then she reach over and slapped the books out of his hands, scattering the papers across the floor. Alice smirked at him as he looked around with a look of shock and anger on his face.

"What the hell?" He threw his hands up some and Alice walked away from them. She went straight to the office. Adam's aunt, the secretary, wasn't in the office that day. She was apparently taking time off because of Adam, but he was at his therapy session. Alice walked out the doors of the school and to her car. She sat down in the driver's seat then set her head on the steering wheel.

Alice didn't like the way people treated Adam. She slightly wished that it was back before he dad had left. Alice would have went to school, smiled, talked to everyone, and not had a single care other than what she was going to make on her next English test. At this point in her school career, Alice was surprised that she wasn't failing terribly.

After what seemed like forever, Alice decided to start the car and pull out of the parking lot. She was going to go to Adam's therapy session. Alice parked outside of the building and sat waiting for him. Roughly twenty minutes later, Adam walked out of the building. His arms were still bandaged, he was wearing baggy sweat pants, and he looked paler than usual. Alice jumped out of her car and ran around the front of it stopping Adam in his tracks.

"Hey."

"Hey, stranger." He gave her a sleepy smile which made her smile, a real smile, for the first time all day. She stepped forward and wrapped him in a hug. Her arms fit perfectly around his thin torso. Adam was boney, small, and fragile. Alice always felt that he needed her protection.

"I missed you today."

"Yeah, I missed you." They stood there for a moment un-moving. Alice pulled away, and pulled down on her shirt.

"Do you have to work?"

"Not today. Could I come over?" Adam nodded some. He took a step towards his car and Alice did the same. They both got in their cars and drove towards Adam's house. Once they got there, Adam got out of the car and went straight to the backyard, not going in the house to talk to his mother like he had promised. Alice followed him the whole way.

Adam laid down in the middle of the yard. Alice followed suit and they both looked up at the sky. The story Adam had told about the knight and the princess always seemed to be playing in Alice's mind. She rolled onto her side and looked at him. He remained looking at the sky. Alice stared at his arms for a moment before speaking.

"Would the knight ever leave the princess?" Adam gave her a slightly confused look for a moment before he understood what she meant.

"Oh, um, no. I don't think that he would. Even when he does something completely stupid that would get him killed. You see, he loves this princess and when he did do this stupid thing that I can't think of at the moment. He thought of her at the last moment, then wished that he could undo what he had done."

"Basically, she's what's keeping him alive." Adam stared at the clouds for a moment then nodded.

"In hindsight, yes. You are correct, my dear."

"I stood up for you today." Adam looked towards her some then rolled onto his side to face her. He studied her face with his eyes as he had done every time he saw her.

"You shouldn't have."

"Why not?"

"They hate me, don't make them hate you. Besides, I don't need you doing that."

"What if I want too?" Adam stopped for a moment then ran a hand through her hair.

"Then I cannot stop you." Alice smiled at him some and they just laid there side by side talking about everything under the sun.