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On The Third Day

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Abstract

In lieu of an abstract, below is the essay's first paragraph.

"Coming up, we have the bikini and belly-flop contests," announced the disc jockey with a wave of his hands."

Cover Page Footnote

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On the Third Day

by John Falzone

"Coming up, we have the bikini and belly-flop contests," announced the disc jockey with a wave of his hands.

These two contests were the high point of the gang's Easter vacation. John, Chip, Eric and Jeff had absolutely nothing to worry about. They would wake up around ten and tan until late afternoon, when the contests and events would begin to take place at the back of the motel. Like most, the gang's motel had a pool. The crowd at the pool and its surrounding area would not clear out until five or six o'clock.

On the third day of their vacation, the gang quit tanning at 1:30. The experience that would follow was something that John would never forget.

"We're going to get something to eat and do some shopping. Do you wanna come, John?"

"No, the sun drained me out today. I'm gonna take a short nap and then a shower."

"Alright, see you around sevenish."

John napped for a little more than an hour. After his shower, he went for a stroll to see if anybody was doing anything exciting. He remembered that the last time the gang "strolled" around the motel, they were witnesses to an all-out brawl.

Chip had wanted to break it up because at one point in the fight, two guys were beating up on a smaller one.

"Let's just get outta here. I don't feel like getting arrested," Eric had cautioned.

Jeff and John had just watched. They felt there was nothing they could do.

As John went for his second stroll, he hoped that he would not encounter another brawl because his gang would not be there if he needed them.

He walked out back by the pool, but instead of hearing yelling and screaming from the contestants and the audience, John noticed that everyone was motionless and silent. They were all looking in one direction, towards an ambulance and a helicopter.

John continued to follow their eyes and saw a young man lying on his back a few feet from the pool. As John got closer to this young man, whom he had never seen before, he couldn't help but notice the opening in his head and the blood oozing out.

"What happened?" John asked with reluctance.

A bystander answered excitedly, "We were just hangin' out and this dude on the fourth floor and some guy down here were playing frisbee but it was out of his reach, but he tried to reach it anyway and fell and I ... heard his head hit the concrete and it sounded like a thick church door slammin' shut."

The paramedic overheard the testimony and said, "He caught it alright, right in the coffin," as he cleaned up the blood with several white towels.

The paramedics covered the youngster's face and wheeled him off into the ambulance.

The yelling and screaming were far from over. John went around to the front only to notice that everyone had fixed their eyes on something or someone again. John followed their eyes and hoped he wouldn't find something worse than what was out by the pool.

"Get outta here. You have no heart!" shouted the angry inhabitants of the motel.

Much to John's surprise, they were yelling at a cameraman who was taping the aftermath of the tragedy.

The police who were already present asked him to stop taping. At a distance, John saw the cameraman nod his head and take his camera off his shoulders, only to walk to another part of the parking lot and continue his job.

John went to the lobby to mail some postcards and the dead guy's friends were there, crying. There was nothing John could do except watch.

It was getting close to four o'clock and the rain began to pour down on top of the cars. For the first time that week, John had to put on pants because it was so cold.

The guy's death made John think: which one of the guy's friends is going to tell the parents that their son is dead?

The rain let up but the sky was as dark as a deserted church. Chip, Eric and Jeff came back and John told them what had happened and they sat in silence for the first time that week. It was as if they were waiting for the priest to commence down the aisle before a mass.

Later, when the lights came on, the pool looked beautiful and the gang made plans for the evening.

There were more fights that night.

Nature's Haiku

Joyous Butterfly:
Your wings beat the air like a
Little paper fan.

Poor Dandelion!
How sad that the wind blows your
Lovely crown away.

A.D.A.