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Only In My Dreams

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

"September, 1988

I can still feel the terror in the pit of my stomach, hear the cruel wind that wouldn't help me, see the hatred and madness in his usually calm blue eyes, still feel the screams stop in my throat, forming a lump and turning to sobs."

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LAURIE WARD

Only In My Dreams

September, 1988

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October, 1992

It all comes back to me as I look at him again. I look around to see if anyone notices how scared I am. My friends are laughing. They don't notice anything. He sees me from across the crowded bar, our eyes meet, and I look away. I want to get out of here, but my legs won't move.

He's coming closer. He's fighting the crowd and making his way toward me. I turn to see that my friends have wandered to a corner with some friends from college. I'm all alone, just him and me. The way it was then. That night when he took it all away from me. He robbed me of my self-esteem and he stole my faith and my judgment in myself. And that's the way it'll be now, tonight, when I take it all back.

My back is to him, but I know he's right behind me. He reaches out and touches my arm and I coil away. I take a deep breath and turn around. "Hi, Laurie. What are you doing here?"

Not really, I'm talking to Chris."
"I really don't feel well. Do you think he'll bring you home?"

Her eyes brighten. "What a great idea." She hugs me. "Want me to walk you to the car?"
"No, I parked right out front. I'll be fine."

I pull my keys out, say good-night to a few people and walk out to my car. I almost know what is coming and I'm not surprised when I hear his voice, oozing in nicety. "Leaving already?"
For some reason I'm not scared. I slowly turn around. "I'm tired."

"I hope you're not leaving 'cuz of me, Angel." Angel, that's what he used to call me, actually I think it was his "worthless angel". Don't flatter yourself, asshole. "No, not at all. I'm tired."

He comes closer and I can smell the beer on his breath. "Don't you miss me?"
"Not at all." My voice starts to shake and I clear my throat. I take a few steps back away from him.

"We used to have some good times, Laur."
"Maybe, a long time ago."

"Yea, you remember. We did." He brushes the hair off my cheek and I am repulsed by his touch. "Mark, leave me alone."

"Oh, don't be like that."

I kick him in the groin and walk quickly to the other side of the car. My heart is racing, but I'm not scared. I only hope I have enough time. I open the car door and reach under my seat. I'm standing back up again by the time he makes his way to me. He doesn't see my hand.

"You little bitch."

I smile. "That's the nicest thing you ever said to me."

He lunges at me and I hold the gun out for him to see. He almost falls on his face trying to stop himself. "What the hell is that?"
"What does it look like?"
"Why do you have that?"
"You made me what I am today." I laugh as I say it.
"Put it down, Laur."
"NO."
"What are you going to do with that?"
"Kill you." I say it so matter-of-factly, too much so that I don't think I really said it. I hold the gun out and aim for where his heart would be, if he had one. I step closer and he cowers.

I love this power. Is this the way he felt? Probably. Too bad! Not a good enough excuse.
"No, Laurie, please, no."
"I said no, too." I close my eyes and pull the trigger, "But you didn't listen."

October, 1993

I wake up, sweating and shaking, hoping It's all a nightmare. But I know that the end was a dream, the rest was a cruel dose of reality.