

## The Man With the Black Shirt

All I could hear was my feet pounding on the street. Running at night was the most peaceful thing. The only thing you hear is the sound of your own breathing and footsteps. No one else is around. I felt so free and safe. It was my night for a long run, ten miles down the long country roads. It was summer, off in the distance I saw the sunset. It was so beautiful. Orange, purple and pink painted across the sky. Tonight there wasn't that cool summer breeze. It was hot, about 90. I was in spandex and a t-shirt but I was still hot. I took off my shirt and threw it on the side of the road. I was at the three mile mark, two more miles down the road and I would turn around and come back to my shirt. I felt the sweat dripping down my face, I wiped it away with a smile. I loved the feeling of a long run. The sweat, the burning feeling in your legs screaming at you to stop. But still I pushed it. I hit the five mile mark and turned around. I was starting to get a little cramp in my side.

“Half way done, come on, you can do it!” I told myself. I heard the sound of a car coming. I moved over the left side of the road. As the car got closer it began to slow down. I glanced to my right and saw the car next to me.

“ Need some water? Its hot out there!” A man asked me from his car. He was wearing a black shirt. He had short brown hair and a brown beard.

“ Uh, no I'm okay. Thank you though.” I started to run faster. This guy was

freaking me out

“ Alright, have a good run!” He replied as he drove away. I picked up the pace again. It was starting to get dark and I didn't feel so safe anymore. Up ahead I saw the car turning around and heading back my way. I saw my shirt about 100 yards up ahead. I sprinted up to it and put it on as the man passed by me again. This time he didn't stop or say anything he just kept driving. I was starting to get scared.

“ Three miles left, lets make this quick.” I told myself. I started to run faster. I could feel my legs burning. The cramp in my side was almost unbearable. I heard the sound of a car coming again. I turned my head to see if it was the same man. It was. This time he didn't slow down he was coming towards me and fast. He was right behind me and wasn't moving over. He swerved toward me just as I jumped into the ditch on the side of the road. I landed in a pond. Water was up to my neck. He stopped and I heard him get out of the car. I couldn't run in this high of water so I started to swim. I didn't know where I was or where I was headed. I saw a stream of bright light flashing down the pond and coming toward me. As it passed over my head I ducked under water and continued to swim forward so the man couldn't see me. When the light was gone I popped my head out of the water and took in a deep breath. I heard a car door close and the car start to drive away. I moved up the ditch toward the side of the road and no one was in sight. I got back on the road and started running again, faster. I wouldn't stop until I got home.

“ Come on Alex, two more miles. Just get home.” I said out loud. I had never ran

so fast in my life. I had a cramp on both sides, I could barely breathe, and my legs started to feel like jello. But I couldn't stop, I wouldn't.

“ Who was he and why did he try to run me off the road?” I thought. I didn't care, the only thing I cared about now was getting home. My whole body was wet from the pond. With every step my shoes squeaked and my wet hair brushed across my neck. Finally I reached my house. I took off my shoes in the garage and walked in to find both my parents laying on the floor, bloody.

“ Oh my gosh!” I screamed and ran over to them. My mom wasn't breathing, and neither was my dad. I ran into the kitchen to find the phone. I stopped. Standing in my kitchen with a bloody knife and the phone was the man. He had a smile on his face.

“ Hello Alex.”