

Harris Street

Damian suddenly became alert. A noise had come from the room next to his. He walked slowly over to the other room. It was too dark to see anything. The boy walked back to where he had been sleeping, trying to avoid the loose nails that were scattered all over the floor. He stepped forward on the wood and he felt a tiny pain on the bottom of his foot. Damian started to lift up his foot but when he did, he lost his balance, and fell backwards on the floor.

Damian let out a scream of pain. He pulled his hand over to his face. There was a small hole in his hand.

Seeing this made him swear in horror. He looked over to where his hand had been when he felt the pain, and he saw a bloody nail sticking up from the floorboard.

Damian rolled himself over to where he had been sleeping. He took the cloth he was using as a blanket and put pressure on his hand, which was now bleeding freely.

Suddenly he heard the noise again, but this time it came with a gruff voice.

“Did you hear that scream?” the man asked.

“It’s probably some teenagers camping out here, trying to scare each other,” said another voice.

“When I find those kids I’m going to let them have a piece of my mind,” said the first voice.

Damian heard the two men coming closer. He tried to find a place to hide. He could now hear their breathing. Damian hid behind a cardboard box. The men were almost to his hiding place. Damian could now see them through a crack in a shelf. They had security guard uniforms on, and they were both carrying flashlights.

Damian had little time. They were going to find him and turn him in. Just then Damian realized the cardboard box he was hiding behind was open. Right before the men turned the corner Damian jumped in the box and landed on his hand.

Damian made another yelp of pain, which made an echo. “I heard him over there!” said one of the men, and Damian heard them running towards where they thought they heard the voice. Eventually he couldn’t hear the men anymore.

Damian waited ten minutes until he was sure they were gone to come out of the box. After all this commotion Damian forgot that his hand was still bleeding. Damian started putting pressure on his hand again.

Damian lay back down on the cold floor. This being his first night in the warehouse, it was hard. He missed having his mom love him. He missed his brother, Patrick. A tear ran down Damian's face. A lot had changed these few days.

A few days ago.

"We're going out to drop off Thomas at his friend's birthday party. See you guys later!" said Damian's mom to his younger brother Patrick. Thomas, who was putting on his shoes to leave, was Damian's other younger brother. He was nine years old, which was seven years younger than Damian. He had short brown hair, brown eyes and he was very stocky.

"Damian, look after Patrick. He's always getting himself in trouble." Patrick giggled. Patrick was very small for being four. He had a tiny nose, blue eyes and blond hair. He always wore a smile even when things seemed bad.

Damian was tall and slim. He had brown hair and blue eyes.

Thomas started tugging on his mom's pants. "Come on, I don't want to be late," pleaded Thomas.

"Okay, Okay!" said Damian's mom. "Bye," she said to Damian and she shut the door.

"I'm going to make some soup, do you want any?" asked Damian.

"No," said Patrick.

Damian started making soup and Patrick went upstairs to go play on the balcony.

When Damian finished making his soup, he walked upstairs to eat.

When he got to the balcony, Patrick was running in circles. "You're here!" screamed Patrick, running over to the small bars that were guarding people from falling off.

"I can fit my head through the bars, look!" exclaimed Patrick as he put his head through the bars. "I could probably fit my whole body!"

"Don't try. If you fell from there it would be a long drop," said Damian through a mouthful of soup.

"Can I have some chocolate?" asked Patrick.

"Not until you have dinner. I still have some extra soup out if you're going to want some," said Damian.

“I want chocolate now!” screamed Patrick, jumping up and down. “I don’t want soup!”

“Well you can’t have chocolate then,” said Damian.

Patrick started to squeeze Damian.

“Can I have chocolate, pretty please with a cherry on top?” asked Patrick, squeezing Damian.

“No, and for the last time no,” said Damian, pushing Patrick off of him.

Patrick stumbled back and tripped and fell back to the gate. In seconds that to Damian felt like hours, Patrick fell through the bars on the gate.

“Patrick!” screamed Damian, dropping his soup on the ground, running as fast as he could downstairs. Damian stumbled down the stairs but still kept running. He bolted out the door and ran up to Patrick, whose small head was covered with blood.

“Patrick,” said Damian in tears, feeling around Patrick’s neck, and finally finding a pulse. Patrick looked up at Damian and said, “I only wanted chocolate,” and the pulse stopped. Damian erupted in tears.

Minutes later, their mom’s car pulled up, and their mom and Thomas came out of the car.

“We got lost on the way to the party. When we finally got there, we found out it was cancelled,” said Damian’s mom. Damian’s mom froze when she saw Damian’s face covered in tears.

“What’s wrong?” asked Thomas.

But then they saw. Thomas and Damian’s mom ran over to Patrick. “What happened to him?!” screamed Damian’s mom.

“He fell!” said Damian, choking in his tears.

“How did he fall?” screamed Damian’s mom.

“I pushed him by accident,” said Damian.

Damian’s mom looked up at Damian in pure anger. Damian’s mom said, “Leave.”

“What?” asked Thomas and Damian simultaneously.

“I told your brother to leave,” Damian’s mom told Thomas. Damian’s mom turned to Damian and screamed, “Leave!”

Damian turned away and ran from the house. He had never seen his mom that angry. He couldn’t stop running. He was scared.

Damian ran until he reached his best friend Mack's house. He knocked on the door and Mack answered. When Mack saw Damian, he leaped out and grabbed Damian and threw him behind a bush next to the door.

"What happened?" said Mack in a hushed voice.

"What do you mean?" he asked.

"You know what I mean," said Mack.

Damian replied, "I killed my brother."

"What!?"

"It wasn't on purpose," explained Damian, still choking up tears, "We were on the balcony on my house and he was asking for something, I think it was chocolate, and he started jumping on me and I shoved him and he accidentally fell off the balcony."

Mack just stared into the distance as if trying to play what Damian had just said over in his head. Mack turned to face Damian. "Why are you here?"

"My mom kicked me out," said Damian "You were the first person I thought of. I was wondering if I could stay at your place. My mom's pretty mad. I don't know when I can go home."

"Well, your mom already called my mom, and told her something, and then my mom said that I can't be friends with you anymore."

"But I need somewhere to sleep."

"I'm sorry. I could bring out a sleeping bag if you want to sleep outside."

Damian agreed.

Mack and Damian started talking for a long time. Damian kept on repeating every detail to Mack. He told the whole story twice. Damian realized it was dark out when they finished. Mack did too and retrieved a sleeping bag and he handed it Damian.

"I'm still really sorry," said Mack, "I'll sleep out here with you if you want me to."

"I'm okay," said Damian.

Mack left and went inside. Damian laid the sleeping bag on the hard, damp ground, and crawled in. He looked up into the stars, now feeling worse than he already had. There was a lot of noise outside. Crickets were chirping, the trees were rustling, and he heard a raccoon feasting on a neighbor's garbage.

He opened his eyes. Mack's dog, Justin was licking Damian all over. "Off Justin!" Mack ordered. Justin leaped off of Damian.

"Sorry about that," apologized Mack, restraining Justin from jumping on Damian. "I had to bring the dog. Dad was about to take Justin out to pee, but I volunteered instead. I don't know what Dad would think if he saw you out here..."

"Let's go to school," Damian spurted out.

"What?" asked Mack, obviously taken aback.

"School," said Damian.

"I know, but why would you go to school?"

"What do you mean?" asked Damian curiously.

"You don't have anybody telling you what to do, why would you go to school?"

That's when it hit Damian. He was free.

After Mack left for school Damian went downtown. Mack gave him ten dollars in fives to buy a lunch. He walked down Fourth St. to find a good lunch place to eat at. He was thinking about eating at *Cal n' Dale's Meat Café*, but before he went in the restaurant he saw a street across the block labeled *Harris St.*

My mom always hurried past there, thought Damian, just a peek. He walked in front of the street. *It was less of a street than an alleyway.* He slowly walked in, having to jump to the side to avoid stepping on the vomit on the bumpy ground.

"What are you doing here, white boy?" boomed a voice from behind him. Damian twisted around. There was a gang of about eight kids each about the same age as him, each wearing a red bandana on their ankle. About a half of the kids were smoking a cigarette. The boy who had just talked was brandishing a silver knife.

"Are you deaf?" asked the boy. Damian shook his head as he was backing up against a small warehouse.

"Are ya' here to get some smokes?" asked a loud voiced girl who was smacking on gum, with black hair and black make-up, next to the boy with the knife.

Damian was about to exclaim all the stuff he had learned in health class to say to someone who was offering him a cigarette, and all things his mom said about the dangers of smoking. His *mom*. Damian didn't care what she said. He could do anything.

"Yes," said Damian, not believing his own words.

“Five fer’ a pack,” said the girl. The girl extended her arm, and Damian reached into his pocket, pulled out a five-dollar bill, and placed it in the girl’s hand.

“Tommy!” screamed the boy with the knife.

“Yes?” said a boy smoking in the corner.

“Get this man a pack!”

Tommy reached into his bag and pulled out a pack of cigarettes. He passed the pack to the boy with the knife and said, “Here you go Ced.”

Ced handed the pack to Damian and said, “Now get out of here.”

“Do ya’ need a light?” asked the girl, blowing a bubble.

“Yeah,” said Damian.

The girl lit one of Damian’s cigarettes, and Damian tried to smoke but he started gagging instead.

“Newby?” asked Tommy as he lit his second cigarette.

“Maybe smokin’ isn’t your thing, how bout’ ya’ come around here later, we’re having a party,” suggested the girl.

“Melissa!” exclaimed Ced, agitated.

“I’d love to,” said Damian.

“Great,” said Melissa.

Ced let out a curse word.

Damian left to go get lunch, excited for the party.

At around eleven o’clock, Damian headed back to Harris St. for the party. When he got there he saw that there was a crowd formed in a circle. Damian spotted Melissa and walked towards the familiar face. “

What’s going on?” he asked.

“Look,” said Melissa, pointing towards the middle of the crowd. Tommy was lying on the ground chugging a bottle of some sort of alcohol. Tommy finished halfway through the bottle, and stood up with a great applause from the audience.

“Anybody else wanna shot at it?” asked Tommy who was clearly drunk.

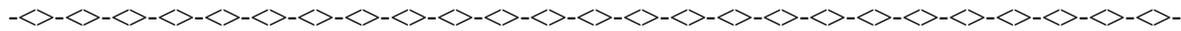
“I’ll do it,” said Damian, trying to fit in.

“Really?” asked Tommy “You?”

“Yeah,” said Damian taking a full bottle of whatever Tommy was drinking and started to tip it into his mouth. But before he could taste the alcohol, a siren started sounding very loud.

“COPS!!!!!!” yelled Ced. Tommy cursed and everybody scattered. Damian ran as fast as he could away. When he looked back he saw the police pulling off drunken Tommy and putting him in the police car. Damian liked the police and never thought he would be the guy running from them. Damian saw the warehouse next to the street and bashed through the door.

Damian heard the police coming closer. He saw a big box next to a shelf and dived behind it. After a while the commotion stopped so he pulled a rag over himself as a blanket and fell fast asleep.



Days passed, the wound in his hand had started to cover up. The police had stopped patrolling the area. Some of the kids in the area that had escaped the party told him that the liquor store had Tommy on camera stealing the bottle of alcohol. The police caught Tommy, Melissa, and a few other kids, and Tommy was charged for shoplifting.

Damian stayed in the warehouse to sleep and stole food from restaurants and shops to eat. He had never once considered going back to Mack’s house.

One day as he was figuring out what food he wanted to take he saw Mack coming into the shop. Mack caught his eye and Damian freaked.

Damian jumped behind a shelf trying to make himself unseen, but seconds later he felt a tug.

“What are you doing here?” asked Mack.

“I have to leave,” said Damian.

“Why?” asked Mack grabbing Damian, not permitting him to leave.

“Get off of me!” yelled Damian who shoved Mack against the shelf and rushed out of the store.

Later that day while Damian was trying to sleep he heard a noise coming from elsewhere in the warehouse. He got ready to run away. *It’s the same people from the first night* Damian thought. A voice came from where the noise was, but this time it was not a deep gruff voice, it was a high voice that asked “Damian?”

Damian froze, who was that he had heard?

“Damian?” asked a voice that he recognized to be Mack.

“Over here!” Damian loudly whispered.

The flashlight turned toward Damian. He saw Mack holding the flashlight next to a boy.

“Who are you?” Damian asked the boy that he couldn’t see in the dark.

“I’m your brother Thomas, do you even remember me?”

Damian opened his mouth but before he could say anything Thomas cut in.

“Patrick’s funeral is tomorrow, 4:00 at Audoabury Hills Cemetery, and I was wondering if you wanted to come.” He explained “I’ve been searching for you all over town, but today Mack told me where you were, so I asked him to come with me. Mom thinks I’m in bed so we don’t have much time.

“How did Mack know where I was?”

“When you shoved me into the shelf I followed you here,” Mack told Damian.

Damian started to head back to his sleeping area and Mack yelled, “Think about it, okay?” He didn’t answer, but lay down on the hard cold floor and pulled the rag over his shoulders.

The next day Damian spent the whole day thinking about whether he should go to the funeral or not. Eventually Damian made the decision that he would go, so at 4:00 he headed to Audoabury Hills Cemetery.

Damian was hiding in the woods that were next to the grave. He couldn’t make out most of the words but when his mom came up to the microphone to talk Damian tried to move closer to hear what she had to say.

“Ever since my little boy Patrick has passed I have regretted every time I have scolded him and everything I told him he had to be older to do, but mostly I regret how mad I was at my other son Damian. I blamed Damian for killing Patrick who I know both Damian and I love. Because of the way I acted I didn’t just lose one son, I lost two. Damian, if you are out there listening, I forgive you.”

Damian moved out from the cover of the woods. His mom looked up and caught his eye. They shared a smile and his mom said, “I love you Damian.”

“I love you too mom.”