

“NO!” I screamed. After what seemed like minutes but was really hours, I saw my parents and Chris walk into my room. Just then, Mark came in.

“Mr. and Mrs. Powers. Chris,” he said weakly as he stood in the open doorway, sniffing. My mom rose and hugged him. They stood there crying as he said, over and over again. “She wouldn’t wake up. I shook her, but she just wouldn’t wake up,” he cried. “Please, may I stay here? I don’t want to leave just yet,” he asked quietly.

“Of course, dear, we’ll call your family now,” my mom answered, as she wiped her eyes. I couldn’t stand it anymore, I turned away, tears stinging my eyes.

“If only I had stayed home from that stupid party like I was supposed to, none of this would have happened!” I shouted. Finally, I just sat on the back deck all night.

The light was just beginning to appear in the sky when I saw my mother in the kitchen, wearing the same clothes, as the night before making breakfast for the others. Everything looked like a regular morning except Mom’s face was red and blotchy and her eyes bloodshot from crying and, of course, I wasn’t there. She picked up my personalized napkin, mine out of the set I made for each of us in the family, and held it to her face. My father walked in and hugged her.

“Everything will be all right!” I heard him comfort. Chris and Mark came downstairs, and walked into the room, unsmiling, unexpressive like zombies, their eyes red from crying.

I wanted so much to go over and smile, saying, “Look, everyone I’m here! That wasn’t me at that party. It was all a bad dream.”

“A simultaneous bad dream,” a voice inside me said. “Is it really possible for five people to have the same nightmare at the same time? You really screwed up this time, Kid!” it scolded me.

“Yeah, I know, but it wasn’t supposed to turn out this way. I had so many plans, dreams. If only I hadn’t taken that damn cigarette! One puff certainly goes a long way.”

The next few days before the funeral melted into one. There were a lot of people at my funeral. It was awful seeing all my family and friends sitting in the church, crying, comforting one another. After the service, my coffin was taken to the cemetery for burial.

My family and friends crying was the last sight I saw as I turned and walked slowly away.

LEFT OVER

There was a park where an old willow tree stood, bowing her head, staring into a clouded pond.

Her long, straight hair fell, covering her face, hidden thoughts, rustled by the wind, revealed her worries.

Children circled around her, dancing and chanting rhymes. Loners leaned against her, reflecting their lives by the uncleared pond.

Willow sighed when men came with machines. Her leaves shaped of tears fell into the pond with pain.

Casino glitters in darkness. Beside stands an old grave stone: Willow’s stump.

Kheng-Wee Wah

Sunday Evening

**Guffawing idiots as far as the eye can see,
All must be the victims of lobotomy,
What’s so goddamn funny,
They must be getting money,
Finally, I can no longer stand it,
South of the border to kill Bob Saget.**

Written in twenty seconds by Kirby Ferguson