

Alienation

By Jon DEAGLE

The day began naturally, with the abrupt flow that I've become accustomed to since starting high school a few days ago. The rising autumn sun bombarded my small, cluttered bedroom with its rays. The beams spread, illuminating my face, annoying me into waking. I slowly arose, clearing the remains of last night's restless sleep from my face. Reluctantly, I stumbled to my feet, waded through the chaos of my room, and set off to begin another day filled with tension, anxiety, and confusion. This particular time held one difference – Today was Friday.

Filled with premature excitement of the last day of the week, I began to plot my weekend. It seemed I had an infinite amount of time to accomplish what I had intended to do. For someone who dislikes school as much as I do – weekends are small sanctuaries, offering solitude and freedom from the monotony and social politics of high school. This attitude is probably what made me vulnerable to my friends' random suggestions for weekend plans.

I sat in solitude on the school bus until the door grinded open to welcome a familiar face, my friend Chris who had quickly become the only person I spoke with during the seemingly endless bus ride. As the bus crept along, Chris and I discussed various thoughts that had been circling our minds. Our conversation, along with the infinite number of others, eventually turned towards one common theme – the impending weekend. And then suddenly, Chris piped up, "This weekend's going to be great."

"Why?" I asked, genuinely interested.

"My mom's going away for the weekend. You know what that means, don't you?"

"Of course." I said while blankly staring at the floor.

"Sure, you do. Anyway, I'm having a party."

"When?"

"Probably tonight. Sometime after school, you can just show up whenever, but later in the evening would be best."

"Sounds good. I guess I'll go. It's

not like I have anything better to do." With that remark, we sat in silence for the rest of the ride to school.

The rest of the day passed in a dimly-lit blur. I wandered from class to class, hearing the voiceless projections of random teachers. This pointless routine was broken briefly by the beckoning scents of the ominous cafeteria. I eagerly awaited the final bell of the day. As it rang, my anticipation climaxed, and I ran for the exit door. My heart beat faster and my breath shortened as I quickly boarded the bus. I anxiously headed home to prepare for the party.

As I arrived at the party, the sun had already begun its descent into the horizon. A cool wind signalled the change in weather, the strange kind of climate that resembled summer but justified a jacket. The trees had begun to visibly display the loss of their fiery red coats. Freshly-detached leaves crumbled beneath my feet, helping me realize that, although I had arrived late, there seemed to be no signs of a party in progress. I curiously ventured inside and was hit by the intense situation that I did not belong.

This disturbing feeling seemed to emanate from everywhere. The people lay propped against the smoke-stained walls, staring at me with vacant, half-open eyes. They clutched their liquor bottles; as if grasping a cure for some devastating disease. The smells of alcohol and various decaying snack foods assaulted my nostrils, burning my nose. The smoke formed a veil above the stumbling bodies, making my eyes water. I fumbled around in the haze, trying to find some semblance of sanity amidst the disorder.

Eventually, my eyes became accustomed to the blinding mist. My tears subsided, which cleared my vision, for a brief moment – I was able to see the bleak face of one of the fallen partygoers. He mindlessly rubbed his perpetually stained shirt, as he fixed his helpless, twisted gaze on me. Still holding his liquor bottle, he raised it toward me, violently shaking with the strain. This increased the intensity of my agitation; causing my eyes to begin watering again.

Attempting to escape this bleak, hazy terrain, I ventured downstairs an immeasurably large number of decrepit

steps – into the basement. The area seemed to echo the disorder of other parts of the house. Lifeless bodies littered the landscape. The strong odour of spilled alcohol competed with the disturbing scent of decay for dominance. The unsettling darkness of this place made me anxious to return to the haze upstairs. I began my retreat from the basement with calculated steps.

I desperately checked the other rooms of the house for asylum from the party. The living room was dotted with spills, stains, and broken bottles. Unconscious individuals, decorated the floor, murmuring to themselves. The lights had been shut off, I wandered the room using the faint glow of the television. The off-air signal was a beacon, guiding me through the hazy darkness. As I explored, I stumbled across a broken lamp – but found no solace from the inhuman noises made by the partygoers. Once again following the light of the television, I cautiously stepped towards the door.

I stood among the yellow haze of the kitchen, contemplating my next move. Feral noises sounds from within the tiny, darkened bedrooms – I decided not to investigate. I remained still, as the overwhelming noise formed a sonic wall holding me in place. As my anxiety rose, I decided to check the bathroom. It was empty. I quickly entered, closed the door, and became overwhelmed by feelings of anger and isolation.

Sitting crouched on the bathroom floor, I pressed against the door – to prevent anyone from entering. The noises continued outside increased in intensity, but I decided to ignore them. After what seemed like hours of thinking, I still could not understand why I remained alienated amidst this commotion. Was I being spared from an undesirable fate? Had I been a mere victim of luck? These questions were quickly given answers – from an unlikely source.

The freshly awakened moon poured its light onto the small bathroom. The beams spread, illuminating my face, strengthening my resolve. I arose from the cold, damp floor with new confidence and stumbled towards the sink. The cool torrent of water purged my eyes of the haze's remnants. With newfound clarity, I began

to plot my escape.

I looked towards the golden-stained ceiling tiles and began to venture towards the door. With laboured breathing, I stumbled across bottles and bodies. The dark brown door called from across the spacious kitchen. I quickly dashed toward it, grabbed the handle, feeling relieved as fresh air began to cleanse my lungs. Staring at the ominous moon, my eyes once again began to water. I quietly breathed a sigh of relief as my anxiety fell to the ground in the form of tears. Filled with a sense of self-pride, I began running across the endless field of darkness towards my house.

CHEAP PIZZA.

2x1 **24 Slice PARTY PIZZA**
(Any 3 Ingredients)

PRESENT YOUR STUDENT ID FOR PICK-UP ORDERS!

12.99
+ taxes
17.94 taxes and delivery included

NO COUPON NECESSARY!

GRECO:
310.30.30
307 University Ave

This Special Available For Delivery To:
UPEI, BROWN COURT, HOLLAND COLLEGE & COMPU COLLEGE ONLY!!!

Not valid with other specials • This special available for delivery to UPEI, Brown Court, Holland College and Compu College only • Student ID required for pick-up orders only • Payment of Ontario's Food System Tax, and other taxes.