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# Imaginations

## A Long Way by Jennifer Baldwin

"Hey, Jim, where did you say that party was going to be this weekend, again? I can't remember," I called to Jim MacIntyre in the Raven Heights High School cafeteria.

"John Arnold's, on Fifth and Main, Saturday," he answered, shouting to make himself heard over the din of the noon time rush. "I thought you weren't allowed to go."

"I wasn't, but my parents were called away on business for the weekend. So, I thought, what the hell, what they don't know can't hurt them' right?"

"Robyn! Glad you could make it!" John yelled over the music when he opened the door. I could smell beer on his breath. I walked into the room and accepted the beer handed to me, gulping down a mouthful.

"Hi, Robyn!" I heard on each side of me as I pushed my way through the crowd. I felt an arm slip around my waist. Spinning quickly, I almost spilled my drink on my boyfriend.

"I thought you weren't allowed to come?" Mark Franklin shouted into my ear.

"My parents are away this weekend." He grinned, leading me towards a chair. Sitting down, he pulled me onto his lap. For the next few hours we sat like that drinking and laughing and talking to our friends. At about midnight, someone came over, holding out a cigarette.

"Here, take a drag," he shouted, too loudly. I waved it aside, grinning.

"I quit."

"Oh, come on, it's only a cigarette," he insisted.

"Okay," I relented. "Just one." I reached for the cigarette and took a quick draw and started to cough.

"I guess I'm not used to smoking anymore," I said, as everyone started to laugh. I took a few more puffs and coughed again. It was funny until everything started to get distorted as my chest started to heave. I gripped Mark's arm. "What's happening to me?" I asked myself.

"Robyn?" He asked, "Are you okay?" My chest began heaving harder as I gasped for air.

"Robyn? Quick, someone, get a doctor, FAST!" he

yelled. Everyone stood there, paralyzed. "NOW!" He shouted. Someone ran for the phone, then everything went black.

"Gosh! What happened!" I asked, confused, as I rubbed my head, standing at the edge of a crowd of people. I asked a sobbing girl next to me what was the matter, but instead of answering my question she turned to the person next to her as though I wasn't there.

"They say she's dead!" she sobbed.

"Dead!" I thought. "My God, what happened?" I made my way through the crowd, squeezing through every gap I could find. I finally made my way through.

"Mark? Why is he crying?" I asked myself. I sat down and put my arm around his shoulders. He acted as though he couldn't see me, like I wasn't there. Then I glanced at the body, glimpsing the face as the ambulance attendants zipped up the bag and I saw myself lying there, - cold, motionless, lifeless. "This can't be happening!" I screamed as I jumped up.

"I'm not dead!" No one turned my way. I waved my hands in Mark's face, no reaction. He jumped up and grabbed the guy who had given me the cigarette.

"What did you put in that thing?!" he demanded, gripping the guy by the front of his shirt.

"Just a little hash, man. I didn't think it would hurt her!" He stood there shaking as his eyes followed the attendants carrying the stretcher out of the house.

"I should kill you for this,..." Mark screamed, throwing the guy to the floor and running out. I ran out of the house and walked home to find a police car parked in the driveway.

"This is all a bad dream, that's all!" I tried to convince myself as I walked up the driveway.

"No!" I heard my brother, Chris, yell as he sat down and began to cry.

"Son, where are your parents? We have to notify them right away," I heard the officer ask gently.

"They're not here," he whispered hoarsely, lifting his tear stained face. "They've gone away for the weekend. She wasn't supposed to be at that party. She never told me she was going." He cried harder, letting his head fall to his arms again. I never heard the rest. I ran away, crying. Going through the back way, I went upstairs to my room. Throwing myself on my bed, I cried in convulsions.