

I'm lying on a bed in hospital. I can't remember its name. The doctors have come back and forth telling me various different things but I can barely hear them. I see them all, some with red hair, dark hair, blonde hair; one of them even had blue streaks running through their hair. Some were short, others tall and others seemed completely ordinary. I could see the countless ethnicities in the doctors, and maybe psychologists, I'm not sure.

But I get nothing from their voices; I can't hear them, not really. A specialist would tell you that my brain is registering these words into my memory. But these words just aren't making it to my mind, because I'm stuck; I'm scared and hopeless and drowning in a sea of guilt that I can't escape. I've been thrown into this ocean of desperation and I find I can't swim anymore. My whole body feels like jelly and I can't really feel my legs. My parents have been here but I don't hear their words either. There is however one thing I find myself able to do: write.

*It started weeks ago. I had just started year 10 in school and was doing quite well in the exams. I had some very good friends and most were sound, bar one. The one was John. His name was John Smith, no middle name. I think he took the fact that his name was so common and boring to mean that he should counteract it with being absolutely insane. He was always the one trying to get people to try new things, which was a really good thing, to an extent. Unfortunately, John was one of those people who had the inability to 'see the line.' The line is one we all know about. The line you don't cross. The line that you make sure you see before doing something. The metaphysical line that almost everyone can see. John was blind to this.*

*Sure, everyone tried to show him it, but he refused. He saw it that anything he saw that pricked his interest even a little, he had to do. So on the off-chance day that I was walking home with him – just the two of us – he decided to do something different. He had officially decided that he had never been on a construction site. Now, accuse me of being boring and stuck-up, but I explained to him that the reason he had never been on a construction site was because he needed a permit that we couldn't get at fourteen. So what did John do? He found a way in.*

*I was convinced that he had made a hole days before and was just acting surprised so that he could show someone. He said we should ditch our bags by the entrance and at that time I said: "Sure why not?" Without thinking the first thing someone would do when they saw school bags lined up against a construction site fence, would be to assume that some kids had jumped it. Despite his lack of sanity, John had got me excited.*

*I looked up just before I climbed through the gap. The clouds were growing darker, even though it was only four in the afternoon. But I could still see the high voltage and various other danger warnings around the area ahead of me. John was on the other side grinning. I looked past him and saw a truck picking up and transporting large rocks, and all different types of dangerous equipment lying around, as if their sole purpose was to tempt John. I should have stepped back. I should have taken him with me. I should have done something but I just climbed through.*

*I could smell cement. I could see it too, everywhere I looked. Of course John was more interested in massive drills, but I held him off enough to survive. We passed some pretty big construction vehicles, and we saw a couple of workers. We got past most of them, and narrowly avoided others. I was begging him to go, but he insisted he had to see one more thing, like he wasn't satisfied with the*

large drills that drill through our ears, or the trucks with wheels taller than our heads. Then we found it.

*I don't know what they were trying to build, but it looked like a clean, spherical asteroid had hit the planet. In front of us lay a colossal circular hole in the ground, easily about 30 feet down and maybe 40 feet across. I thought it was awesome. We were entranced by this spectacle of what looked like our own like version of the Grand Canyon. It was a pale yellow all around, just like the rest of the site. It looked neat though, like someone had smoothed it all over, I had no idea what they could possibly be building, but that only made it more incredible. It didn't even smell like cement. We stood still for another few seconds in silence. Then John opened his mouth.*

*"Worth it or what?"*

*"Definitely" I replied, the words barely escaping my mouth.*

*Then it was ruined. Our perfect picture had been cruelly tainted by the first of many drops of rain. Within a minute it was pouring down and we sprinted back to our bags. I ran down my road and waved at John as he went down his. Just as he left my sight I heard him shout, "Oh, we are so going there tomorrow!"*

*And we did exactly that. We went a few times actually. But just the other day, John had a crazy idea. He wanted to go down it.*

*On one side of what we called the 'Canyon,' the builders had constructed a couple of short platforms along side, but they didn't go very far down. We guessed they have gone a little deep and were trying to level the bottom a bit, because on our way there we saw a large metal cement container, the kind that spins round at a diagonal angle and they collect it out the other side. It arrived at about the same time as we did, as we had to go around to avoid being caught, and it just went straight through. They had a crane turn around with a grapple-like end and it made it seem way too much like one of those impossible arcade machines where you have to try and pick up the fluffy toy. It really made it seem almost unrealistic. We'd soon learn better. They got one round of cement and the grappler took it over to the middle and began pouring it in. There were no workers on the platforms. There were no other workers in sight, other than the two at the cement truck, one of which was leaving, and the other guy in the crane.*

*It was then that John had his crazy idea. He muttered something, and I think he said, "You only live once...." But I can't be sure. I never can with John. He leapt down onto the first platform with a thud. There wasn't enough noise to attract any attention though. He slowly climbed down to the second platform. I tried to get him to come back but I couldn't handle climbing down myself, for fear we'd both fall down into the.... Then I saw it. I saw the much bigger picture. Not only would it hurt a lot if he fell, but he'd fall into a pool of cement, and I'd heard disturbing things about how quickly cement dries.*

*I began to scream at John, no longer caring if we were caught, and he turned back and raised his hands. "Dude, don't worry about it, I'm only messing!" He cracked a grin.*

*"Don't bloody do that! Can't you see what you'll fall into if you drop" I waved him back but he didn't budge.*

*He took a dramatic step back and said, "You know sometimes I could swear you were a girl underne..."*

*He was stopped as his foot stepped back onto one of the loose platform bricks that had been taken out, and he tumbled back over the railing which was only a few weeks high. He tried to scream, but his head hit the edge of the massive hole and he was knocked unconscious. I watched there, saliently, as he fell into the cement pile.*

They couldn't get him out without taking his body apart as it had seeped into him all over and he had practically become part of it. At least, that's what the workers told us later on. It worried me how they said it, like they had said it before, like they spoke from some personal experience. I didn't want to think about that happening to anyone else. I wasn't close to being over it happening to one of my friends. They could tell that, which is why they took me to hospital I think. Why they made all those people try and talk to me. But the weird thing is, while I didn't speak right after it happened, I could have, but my speech and hearing slowly went away.

I'm still in this hospital bed. It seems darker in here now but I check the time and it says its only been half an hour, making it 9.30 in the morning. I hand the doctor the notebook and they begin to read. He hands it to another of the doctors and they make a call. I slowly begin to hear things again. I hear 'school, 'press,' 'government.' I don't hear his name. It's like they're only worried about me, when I'm fine. I think the woman with the blue streaks in her hair is calling someone about making things safer, because of two incidents. I don't understand. There is only one incident. It was John, he died, he's the one that's gone. What are they saying?

My speech comes back, and I, almost screaming, ask them what they are doing. I tell them I'm fine, and I can hear their replies, clear as day. I see the woman, and she's the only one here. She's not dressed in scrubs so I assume she is the psychologist.

"You're not okay sweetie."

"I am, I'm fine!" I scream back to her.

"No sweetie, you're not. I'm sorry to be the one to tell you but we thought you knew."

"Knew what?" I was getting angry.

"Sweetie, I'm so sorry but..." She couldn't seem to get the words out.

I followed her eyes to where she was looking and then realised why I was having trouble feeling my legs and why my body felt like jelly.

The jelly feeling was an anaesthetic, but after checking under the covers, I saw my legs weren't there.

That was when I realised I had made a mistake in my story. I guess I had refused to believe it until now. I didn't stand there in silence; I fell in too, trying to save John. I guess my brain had made me forget, to spare me the pain.

But really sparing me the pain would be making me forget the whole thing.