

A Little Bit Of Weirdness In Clear Lake Texas

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There wasn't a whole hell of a lot going on in Clear Lake, Texas these days. It was too small and too far from anything of importance. It was hotter than hell in the summer and subject to frequent flooding. The only thing keeping the town alive was a giant recycling plant that employed almost thirty people. For a girl like Jordan Fuentes, it wasn't a matter of if you are leaving town, it was a matter of when.

Most of her graduating class left immediately after high school. Her brother joined the Army just so he could leave immediately. Another brother had joined the Marines, just so he could be in boot camp a few weeks after graduation.

Jordan was no different. Her parents divorced when she was five and she rarely saw her father. Her mother worked ten-hour shifts at the plant and was rarely home and when she was, she slept. Jordan knew her only real ticket out of this town was a scholarship. She kept up her grades and aced her ACT's. Her prayers had been answered. She was accepted into USC with a full scholarship. For a small-town Texas girl like herself, she may as well have won the lottery.

She quickly realized that college wasn't about learning as much as it was about re-inventing yourself. She was surrounded by people from all over the world. In Clear Lake, she was top dog, here she was just another wagging tail on the puppy farm. Life was good. She got a job as a barista making 15 dollars an hour plus tips at a coffee house near Sunset. She loved the city. So much history and culture. All of her free time was spent exploring, from Venice to Mulholland Drive and everything in between. She had made new friends and new connections.

Four years flew by and it was time to graduate. Her roommate got her the job. It wasn't much, but it was a foot in the door. Within a few years, she had worked her way up to becoming an editor at the magazine. They now had a staff of almost thirty people. Jordan Fuentes was becoming a real, bonafide grown-up.

The only other person to leave Clear Lake and find success was Lucas Frost. She didn't know him very well, he was a year behind her. Lucas didn't just become kind of successful.....he became incredibly successful. He had the top album on the charts. Just when everyone thought rock and roll was dead, along comes a small-town kid from Texas and proved everybody wrong. His last song had almost *a billion downloads*. That's bound to get anyone's attention. Clear Lake's mayor had gone nuts over Lucas Frost, erecting two huge billboards that proudly read: HOME OF LUCAS FROST

Of course, Lucas had left Clear Lake a few months after graduation and hadn't even been back in the town since. Just exactly how much love he had for his birthplace was debatable. Still, he had made it and made it big. Jordan read that he had just recently bought a house in Malibu. His

neighbors were millionaires and billionaires. He was such a big deal that his neighbors even threw him a *welcome to the neighborhood party*. Jordan couldn't believe this was the same kid who puked in the cafeteria when she was in the tenth grade. No one in town really remembers him. He was quiet and didn't socialize much. Everyone knew him.....*they just didn't know anything about him.*

Her magazine was called *Extravagant*. It was supposed to cover all of the major happenings and bullshit that went down in LA. They liked to think that they had a finger on the pulse of the city. Jordan also quickly realized that none of her co-workers weren't workers. They were just social media and Instagram stars looking for more followers. Her boss liked her and had her pegged as her replacement. Jordan dropped a bombshell one morning when she informed everyone that she had gone to school with Lucas Frost.

"No way! He's like bigger than Jesus and the Beatles put together right now." said one of her co-workers.

"Yeah. Just when you think white people can't do shit anymore, they remind everyone they're still the best at it." said one of her black co-workers.

"Jordan.....do you think you could get an interview with him?" asked her boss.

"Well, my mom used to work with his mom at the plant in our town. I can ask."

"An interview with Lucas Frost.....that would be epic. He usually doesn't do interviews. He likes to keep a low profile." said her boss.

"I'll see what I can do," said Jordan.

She had pretty much forgotten about it. She did mention it to her mother when she called home, which wasn't too often. She didn't really think anything would come of it, which is why she was floored one afternoon when her phone rang. It was Lucas Frost's personal assistant. At first, she thought she was being pranked.

"No, I am his PA. He remembers you from high school. Says he would love to sit down and reminisce about old times. Just remember, no video. You can take photos together, but no video.....oh....he wants you to come alone, with no one else. Is that clear?"

"Absolutely, just give me the time and place," she said, trying not to sound nervous or excited.

"We're working out a studio on Sunset, called *The Lucky Clown*."

"Yes, I know exactly where it is."

"Tomorrow night at six. Please be on time and please come alone."

"Of course."

She hung up the phone and ran into her boss's office.

"I think I just got an interview with Lucas Frost," she said, jumping up and down.

Everyone in the office thought it odd she couldn't even bring a cameraman with her, but then again, Lucas Frost was kind of weird also. They thought it might just be a prank, but it was a chance they'd have to take.

Normally in 2022, it's very hard to stay on top and be the number 1 social media star in the world, but Lucas Frost managed to somehow do it. Everyone seemed to be hanging on every song, every sentence, every move he made. He had even been invited to the White House.

That's how big he was.....and getting bigger by the day it seemed.

She arrived at five minutes before six. They sat in the parking lot. She took one of her male co-workers with her. His name was Tomas. He was a pretty big boy. He looked like he could handle himself. She just felt better knowing he was there, even if there wasn't much he could do if things went south. She had learned very quickly that famous people can be the craziest people on Earth. You just never know what is going to happen when you get some of them to start talking.....*and start thinking.*

She walked up to the back door and pressed the buzzer as she had been instructed to do. A minute later, someone buzzed her in. She walked down the hallway and into a lounge area and there he was, sitting there, eating a bowl of noodles with chopsticks.

"Jordan Fuentes.....oh my goodness, is that really you?" he said, getting up and giving her a big hug, which caught her off guard.

"It's really me."

"God, you are even more beautiful than you were in high school. Come on, sit down, rest your feet. Want some noodles, I had them flown in from Thailand." he said

"My mom phones me and says that Jordan Fuentes lives in LA and wants to interview you. I'm like: no way. I should probably tell you that I had the biggest crush on you in high school. We all did. I don't really know if crushes ever go away. I think some little part of us will always be infatuated with our crushes. Go ahead, you can put that in your interview." he said.

The two of them sat down and had noodles and Saki. They talked for over an hour about high school. She was genuinely intrigued. This was not the same dork she had known in high school. He was almost like a completely different person. He had this swaggering confidence about him that she found as repelling as she did attractive. She had a hard time believing she was having an in-depth conversation with one of the most famous people on planet Earth.

Lucas did allow her to use the voice recorder on her phone. It wasn't the same thing as a camera, but it was going to have to do. She tried not to get caught up in the moment and keep a cool head. This interview was going to make her or break her.

"So, there I am working at a garage in Van Nuys. I'm broke. Living in this crappy apartment, trying to do the whole LA thing. One night, my roommate leaves. Little bastard didn't have his

share of the rent money. The only thing he left was his guitar. I'm genuinely screwed. I owed six hundred dollars in four days and didn't have any of it. I had played guitar before but was never serious about it. I even wrote some songs. So, I'm standing there on Hollywood Boulevard singing for spare change. I got a cowboy hat there and was desperate. I thought I was going to be kicked out. I figure: what the hell do I have to lose. At the end of the fourth day, I had over two hundred dollars in my hat. I was invited to sing at this club in Hollywood that night. Honest to God, I somehow managed to score four hundred dollars more that night. The next morning I walked into the apartment manager's office and handed him the money. Just like that, my star was born. That was six years ago. I've been singing ever since. Hopefully, I'm getting better."

"Hard to believe. Now you've got a mansion in Malibu and your own entourage. Not too bad for a country boy from Texas."

"I've been lucky. I found my calling. I'm just amazed that other people actually buy my songs and listen to my albums. It is an amazing feeling to see people enjoy something you and you alone created. Each song is like one of my children I just have to release into the world."

"So, I'm sure every woman reading this article is going to ask: are you seeing anyone at the moment?"

"Well, sort of. I know it flies in the face of the whole sex drugs and rock and roll thing, but I'm concentrating on my music right now. Don't get me wrong, I'm sure that when the right lady comes along, I will just feel it. I guess I'm an old-fashioned romantic. I want the whole fairy tale from beginning to end."

"I'm sure there will be no shortage of takers for that position," she said as she laughed to herself.

They talked for another hour about everything from music to politics to the afterlife and beyond. When it was time for Lucas and his group to head out for the night. She picked up her phone.

"Can I take a selfie with you Jordan? My friends back in Clear Lake are going to be so jealous."

"Of course."

Lucas held the phone up above them. He quickly kissed her on the cheek as he took the photo. Jordan couldn't believe this was happening to her. He looked at his phone.

"This is my new wallpaper. I wish we could stay and talk for the rest of the night, but the boss says we have to go. Give me your number, I want to stay in touch."

"Of course, hey is there any way I can use the little girl's room? I've been holding it since I got here."

"Right outside and off to the left."

She found the bathroom and stepped inside. She was surprised to see someone in there already. She just smiled and let him move by. At the last second, he grabbed her and pulled her back inside. He held his hand over her mouth.

"Please.....just listen to me, please. Somebody has to know," he said nervously and took her hand off her mouth.

"What the hell is wrong with you?"

"You're that reporter. The one he went to high school with.....right?" he said nervously.

"Yes," she said breaking free of his grip. She thought for a moment about running out, but the more she looked at him, the more convinced she became that this guy wasn't really dangerous.

He looked like a scared seven-year-old after watching an R-rated movie.

"You got to listen to me. These people are crazy. I mean completely fucking crazy. I know, I'm the backup drummer.

They all worship the devil.

Jordan didn't know what to think of this guy. She never expected to hear something like this. This guy was clearly a junkie. Living in LA, it's something you see almost daily. He looked like a junkie who needed a fix.

"You're from that small town in Texas, right?"

"Yes."

"He's going to hold a concert there, pretty soon. Something horrible is going to happen there. You have to stop him. Don't let that concert happen, please." he said trembling.

"Are you really serious?"

"Lady.....if you only knew half of it."

Jordan heard the bathroom door open.

"You okay in there Jordan?" asked Lucas

The drummer's face went completely white. He put his finger up to his lips.

"Fine. Be out in a minute."

She heard the door close.

"Will you call me.....please?" she said and handed him her business card.

"Lady, if they knew I was talking to you, they'd kill me," he said

"I better go first. You might want to wait a minute until I leave."

He just nodded.

"I might be a junkie, but I ain't crazy. I ain't like Lucas and the rest of them."

She just nodded and let herself out. She found Lucas at the back door of the studio. He gave her a big hug.

"It was so great to see you. We have to do this again sometime. I can't wait to show you my new place in Malibu. It's got its own private beach and elevator."

"When you go big, you really go big, don't you?"

"Beats the hell out of that single-wide I was living in at Clear Lake. Take care of yourself. Please don't be a stranger."

She desperately wanted to go back inside and find the drummer, but that would look suspicious. He was clearly afraid for his life. She went back to her car. Her co-worker was still in there, playing on his phone.

"So....how'd it go?" he asked.

"Good, I think. Right up until I went to go use the bathroom."

"What happened?"

"Can you find out the name of the backup drummer of the band?" she asked.

He found it a minute later on his phone and held it up.

"Seth Prince?" he said, showing her his picture.

"That's him."

"Why do you want to know?" asked Tomas

"Just want to know who his friends and band members are. I have over two hours of voice recording. This is going to blow your mind. Turns out everything we thought we knew about him is wrong."

"What do you mean?" he asked

"All those stories about him doing crazy things and getting arrested last year. I don't know. Talking to him, he seems much different, much more down to Earth and normal than the person we see on TV."

"It's probably all for the cameras. As we say in Hollywood: *ain't no business like show business*," he said.

"I guess you have to play the part if you want to be famous. Let everyone think they know you, then you drop the ball," she said.

"You don't get to be where he is without having the right people around you. No matter what he does, he always makes it look easy. Wish I could do that." he said.

"Come on, I'll buy you some dinner. I owe you that much."

"Dinner would be nice, Maybe we can go back to your place and have a tickle fight or something," he said as he smiled at her.

"Yeah.....or we could not and just have dinner," she said, pulling out of the parking lot.

Her boss was ecstatic. The owner of the company was ecstatic. Everyone in the room was ecstatic. She had just scored his first big interview. Not only that, she had gotten him to talk about real feelings and emotions, not just mindless social media crap.

"Jordan, you're amazing. You got him to open up in a way most people could only imagine.....and you did it while making him feel he was in control of the interview the whole time. Absolutely brilliant." said her boss.

"He has a crush on you. You can totally tell." said one of her co-workers.

"Yeah, he was totally hitting on you the whole time." said another.

"Did you hook up with him?" asked her boss

"What? No, we just kind of knew one another from high school, that's all."

"No, he was crushing on you. Just listen to the way he talks to you. He's totally into you." said a co-worker.

"Well, anyway.....well done Jordan. We got the first major interview with Lucas Frost. Not even the major networks could do that."

After the meeting, Jordan knocked on the door of her boss's office.

"Hey, can I ask you something?"

"Of course, have a sit. Ask away," she said.

"The interview was amazing, except for this one very weird incident in the bathroom of the studio," said Jordan, closing the door behind her.

"In the bathroom?"

"Yeah. The backup drummer grabs me and tells me this crazy story about Lucas being some kind of devil worshiper and how he is planning on doing something horrible at this free concert he is having in my hometown."

"Really? That's weird."

"Yes.....it was very weird. I don't really know what to think. I mean he does practically live with Lucas, so I can't just dismiss it as nonsense, but then again.....you see the problem I have here."

"I wouldn't worry about it. Was he high or drunk or something?"

"No, not really. I think he believes it. I mean, I think he thinks Lucas is going to do something evil at this free concert."

"He's going to have a free concert in your hometown?"

"Yes. He just confirmed on his social media this morning. It's only for people who live in Clear Lake."

"And this drummer said that something horrible was going to happen there?"

"Yes. I mean, he was so serious. You should have seen the look on his face. He really believed it." said Jordan.

"Devil worshippers? Come on Jordan, that's pretty far out there. Although I bet sweet Satan does have the most amazing sense of humor.....and those beautiful blue eyes. Makes a girl turn to Jello." said her boss looking out the window.

"Huh?" said Jordan, totally confused.

"Nothing. So, what else do you have on your docket?" she said, turning back around.

"I'm going to cover the concert and follow Lucas around for the next few weeks if that's okay."

"Sure. Just keep those interviews coming and you can do whatever you want. Do you need a credit card?"

"Please," asked Jordan

Her boss reached into her desk and handed her a credit card. She also gave her a thousand dollars in cash.

"I'm okay on cash."

"That's for you to keep. Your interview was the most viewed on every website in Asia this morning. Literally, billions of people are listening to your interview. You're going places kid. I just hope you don't forget about us when you get to the top.

"It's one interview. Besides, as famous as he is, I still just see him as that cute dork who barfed all over the table in high school. I'm not going to be dropping my panties for him anytime soon." said Jordan.

"Playing hard to get is good. It's smart. No guy will respect a girl who puts out on the first date. Just don't play too hard to get either. Go on, get out of here and go buy yourself something to celebrate." said her boss.

Jordan left her office and went to see Tomas. He was sitting at his desk. She snuck up behind him and put her arms around him. He put down his cell and hugged her..

"You just got called up by the big leagues. That interview is going to be heard by half the free world. I heard three major networks want to talk to you. How did you do it? He never grants interviews."

"I've known him since we were kids. He might be a rock superstar, but to me, he's just Lucas."

"That's so cool. You'll have to introduce me sometime."

"I will, hey....I wanted to ask your opinion on something," she said sitting down next to him.

"Sure, ask away."

"Is it possible that Lucas is a devil worshiper?"

"Huh? I don't know. I guess it's possible. Why would you ask?"

"I just had a very strange conversation that night with one of his band members. Very, very strange conversation. I mean, the guy had to be crazy. There's no way Lucas and his band are devil worshippers, right?"

"Well, Jordan. Not every religious person is going to worship Jesus. Some people are bound to be attracted to Satan. I mean if you look around at the world today, I sometimes have to wonder which one is worse. Maybe he just wants to be on the winning team for once? We shouldn't judge him just because he isn't doing what everyone else is. It's his choice."

"Well, yes, but what if he and his group are going to plan some kind of massacre at the free concert in our hometown?"

"How do you know that?"

"It's just something I overheard. I'm sure the guy was crazy. He was obviously a junkie." she said.

"I wouldn't put too much faith in something a junkie tells you Jordan. Not exactly the most honest people in the world, you know. I'm sure if we just pretend he never said anything, it will make life much easier for everybody."

"Yeah....but he did. Don't you think I should at least try and get to the bottom of it? I'm sure it's bullshit, but it is my hometown after all."

"Jordan. You got an in with one of the biggest celebrities in the world right now.....don't go screwing it up. Besides, Satan isn't really so bad. *He's like the best friend you never knew you had.*" Tomas said.

"What?"

"I just don't want to see you slay you golden goose here, that's all. I just wouldn't bring up Satan worship in your next interview with him, if you ever want another. Even if he just laughs it off, his entourage might not think it's so funny. You could be on the next flight home."

"Well then.....mums the word," she said

"Don't forget about me when you have your own network show. I'll probably still be working here, waiting for my big break." Tomas said.

Lucas would call her whenever he was in LA, which wasn't very often. He told her he wanted her to come to his mansion in Malibu. Jordan was nervous. She didn't want him to think she was *that kind* of girl. They type who would drop her panties after a few drinks. A guy like Lucas Frost could have any girl he wanted.....and he seemed to want her. She put on her best evening dress and make-up and hit the road. She took Tomas with her. She even thought of introducing him as her boyfriend, just to see what kind of a reaction Lucas would have. It was a risky move, but she did not like being out of her comfort zone without a safety net. Tomas offered her some degree of protection from the unknown.

"Jordan, these houses are incredible. You only see houses like this in the movies," said Tomas as he approached his gated community.

"Money might not buy happiness, but it buys huge, expensive houses to cheer you up. God, look at some of these houses."

"Internet says this is one of the most expensive zip codes in the country. I wouldn't doubt it," he said.

"So, you're going to be my boyfriend this evening."

"Just this evening?"

"Don't be a dick. I'm nervous enough already," she said, pulling into his driveway.

"How long have we been together?" asked Tomas.

"Two years. We met at work. Our first kiss was at the Christmas party....oh and your mom loves me."

"Whatever you say, dear."

Jordan and Tomas met his bodyguards at the front gate. Another bodyguard searched them before they went inside.

"That was weird."

"He just doesn't want to end up like John Lennon. You can't blame him."

Lucas and his group met them at the front door. He gave her a big hug.

"Lucas, this is my boyfriend, Tomas. He's from Poland," said Jordan.

"Very nice to meet you, Tomas. My house is your house. Come on, I've been dying to give somebody the grand tour." said Lucas.

Jordan and Tomas were both blown away. The house had not one but two swimming pools and two hot tubs. The kitchen was massive. It had every appliance you could think of. The house also had its own movie theater and bowling alley."

"Wow Lucas, this is some house."

"Yeah, my manager found it for me. I think he wanted me to buy it so he could live in it. Tomas, there's a wine cellar downstairs. It has wine bottles that are two hundred years old."

"Really? Can I see it?"

"Sure, just ask one of my people to show it to you. Bring up a good bottle, we need to celebrate tonight."

"Go ahead, honey. Lucas and I need to talk business," she said, kissing him on the cheek.

Tomas headed down the hallway. When he was out of sight, they went out back to the balcony.

"So, that's the boyfriend huh?" said Lucas

"Yup. Been together for two years now."

"Wow, that's a long time. When are you guys going to get married?" asked Lucas.

"I'm not ready to be married.....not quite yet."

"If you aren't ready to marry him, then you don't really love him."

"Lucas Frost.....why would you say a thing like that?"

"Cause it's true. Come on.....that guy's not your boyfriend. Who is he?"

"He's kind of my boyfriend."

"Well, then I will kind of stop talking about it."

"Are you really going to give a free concert in Clear Lake next month?" she asked desperate to change the subject.

"Yup. Going to be the social event of the year for our town. I expect to see you there."

"I wouldn't miss it for the world. Everyone in Clear Lake is talking about you. You're like the biggest thing that ever happened to that town. I'm glad to see all of this success hasn't gone to your head."

"I didn't realize being famous was this much work. You never stop working from sun up to sundown. Nowadays, you have to be constantly stepping up your game if you want to stay on top. I have to do a concert in Norway next week, one in Germany, then one in Moscow, then head back to Clear Lake. All this fame and fortune and I don't have any time to enjoy it. Makes you wonder if it's all worth it."

"Your music is changing the world. You're bigger than the Beatles when the Beatles were big. Yet, you're still the same Lucas from a small town in Texas."

"I never did like our town. I always felt like it was the last stop on the road to nowhere. I watched my mom work herself to death in that recycling plant for fifteen bucks an hour. Small town people are all the same. That's why I love Los Angeles. We all have one thing in common here: we're all trying to escape our pasts and reinvent ourselves. This place is the bullshit capital of the United States, but I love it. I wouldn't want to live anywhere else."

"You don't miss Clear Lake, even one bit?" asked Jordan.

"No. Nothing good ever happened to me there. Nothing good will ever happen to anyone in that shit hole. In Los Angeles, anything is possible. You could be busing tables one day and staring in a major motion picture the next day. You could never do that in Clear Lake. I would still be living in the same single-wide trailer, doing the same shit job my parents did. Not really much of a life."

"Come on, there's got to be some good memories of our town. They can't all be bad."

"I remember my mom coming home from work and getting drunk every night so she could forget about how bad her life sucked. I remember my brother robbing a convenience store so we could buy groceries. I remember having to sell my plasma so we could put gas in our car. Nobody in that town ever did shit to help us. No one cared enough to help us. No one who is poor really has good memories of being poor. I would rather be dead than go back to that life."

"If you feel that way, then why give a free concert?"

"Mom thought it would be a good idea. I'll play a few songs, sign a few autographs, and be done. Once I leave that night, I'm never going back. Not ever, unless it's for my mom's funeral."

"I guess I can't blame you. Looking back on it now, it probably wasn't so great growing up there, but at least we got to meet each other."

"You're still just as beautiful as you were in high school.....drove all us boys crazy. Whatever you got going on with.....Tomas? Is that his name? Well, I hope it works out. He's still better than anyone you would find in Clear Lake."

Jordan was about to respond when one of Lucas's team walked over to him and whispered something in his ear.

"Excuse me Jordan, I'll be right back. Go find Tomas and get yourself a good bottle of wine, please," he said as he quickly hurried back into the mansion.

Jordan headed back inside and found the door she thought went to the cellar. She turned on the light and walked down a flight of stairs. The basement was massive. She could hear some voices in the rooms next to her. As she walked by one of the rooms, she saw a giant pentagram on the floor, with a bunch of candles lit. there was some kind of altar in front. She wanted to snap a photo with her phone, but the voices were getting closer. She turned the corner to see Tomas and two other men looking over the bottle of wine he had picked out.

"Jordan, this is a *Chateau Petrus*. It costs about two thousand dollars.....for a bottle of wine and he has a whole wall full of wines like this. We got to come back here." said Tomas holding the bottle of wine like it was a baby."

"I'll see what I can do."

The group headed back upstairs and rejoined the party. Jordan was itching to get away and take some pictures of that weird room downstairs. She wanted to, but she never got the chance. Between Tomas and Lucas and his security team, she was never alone. Someone was watching her even when she went to use the bathroom. She understood a guy like Lucas cannot be too careful.....but this was ridiculous. Can't a girl pee in peace? It wasn't just her they were watching. They watched all the guests. Big, hulking types guys. She was pretty sure they were armed. It made her wonder just who exactly Lucas needed protection from.

As she was going down the stairs, she saw him with a lady. It was Seth, the drummer from that night at the studio bathroom. He seemed to be having a good time. He was also very well dressed. He didn't look anything like the disheveled mess of a man she listened to that night. She watched him for nearly half an hour until he was alone. She followed him out onto the balcony where he lit up a cigarette.

"Hey stranger, remember me?" she asked.

"No.....have we met before?"

"Yes, that night in the bathroom at the studio. You told me Lucas worshipped the devil."

"I did? Jesus, I must have really high. Sorry about that, hope I didn't scare you too bad."

"So, he doesn't worship the devil?"

"I don't know. I don't think so."

"So, then, what's that weird room in the basement with the pentagram on the floor. Don't tell me you don't know what I'm talking about, I saw it with my own two eyes."

"What weird room in the basement?"

"You also said he was going to do something horrible at that concert he is giving in our hometown. Would you care to elaborate on that?"

"I'm sorry, I don't know what you're talking about. I was so high that night, I don't remember very much. Excuse me." he said and moved her aside as he headed back inside.

Jordan just wanted to get out there. She wanted to leave and leave right this second. There was something about this place and the people inside of it that did not sit well with her. Something about this whole place was just a bit *askew.....as in did not compute. There is a room downstairs with a giant pentagram in it. Some kind of devil worship is happening here, in spite of the drummer's insistence there isn't.*

She was going to get Tomas and get the hell out of here. She had enough of this place and its occupants. There was something Lucas wasn't telling her. Some kind of dark secret he was keeping to himself and his most trusted associates. She wondered what the rest of the world would think of him if they knew what kind of person he was. It became her mission to fill them in the real Lucas Frost.....not the one they saw on TV.

The Lucas Frost who did horrible things down in that little room in the basement. Things most people don't even want to think about. That was the real Lucas Frost. She just had to peel away his costume for all to see.

Tomas was holding the bottle of Petrus in his arms. It was almost too good to be true. She decided to drive home on Malibu Canyon Road. It was going to be a while back into the city.

"I could sell this online and make a fortune, but that wouldn't be right. Lucas gave this bottle to me to be enjoyed. I want to know if 2,000 dollar wine tastes any better than twenty-dollar wine. If I open it, it's worthless. The hell do I do?"

"Tomas.....did you see anything odd down in that wine cellar?" she asked driving home.

"Like what?"

"Like a giant pentagram in one of the rooms?"

"Um....no. What are you talking about?"

"I saw it. It had candles and an altar. It also had this very weird vibe to it."

"No, I just saw wine, that's all," he said.

"I talked to that drummer I met that night in the studio. Says he doesn't remember talking to me. Doesn't know anything about devil worship or a massacre at that free concert in town."

"Jordan, he gave me a two thousand dollar bottle of wine. I don't think he's all that bad a guy. You should just let this go. I mean, after all, *Satan runs the show here, not the other guy. We're all his little ponies.*"

"What did you just say?" she asked, almost driving off the road.

"What?"

"You just said Satan runs the show here, not the other guy."

"No, I didn't."

"Yes, you did, I heard it."

"Jordan, I never said that."

"Ok, Tomas. If you know something, it would be great to fill me in," she said.

"Well, I'm going to hold onto this bottle for a while and see if it appreciates."

"It's a bottle of wine Tomas, it's not worth anything."

"Only if you don't drink wine."

Over the next week, Jordan did her best to simply write it off. It was borderline insane, not to mention very destructive to her career. She wanted to simply move on from Lucas. If it didn't involve her hometown, she probably would have. Lucas made it abundantly clear he had no use for their hometown whatsoever. She saw his point. It wasn't much of a town. Those fortunate enough to be able to leave most often did. It was just a giant trailer park with a recycling plant. Still, Lucas seemed to not just dislike it, but genuinely *hate it*. He spoke with venom in his voice about it. Still, that didn't mean he was a Satan worshiper. She wanted to just move on, but she couldn't. She had seen it in the room in the basement. She had heard it from the drummer, even if he didn't remember it.

She was reasonably certain that something very bad was going to happen at the free concert in Clear Lake. Something life-altering and unforgettable.

It was absurd. She just had no idea who to contact, or how to do it. She had to be very careful and plot her next move accordingly. She figured contacting anyone in Clear Lake was going to be a waste of time. There were the Texas Rangers and Texas Department of Investigations, but she didn't have anything specific. She had to have something concrete to tell them. She couldn't just say something horrible was going to happen. They probably get letters like that all the time. She needed some kind of evidence.

She knew she would be exposing her hand if she did anything and that would mean the end of her relationship with Lucas. It might also mean the end of her career. She hated the cancel culture, but hate it or not, it was alive and well and seemed to punish those who dared speak up.....*and this was one time that someone desperately had to speak up.*

She typed up the letter. It was as descriptive as she could be. She mailed it to the Department of Homeland Security. She made it very clear it was not a hoax and that they needed to check out Lucas Frost. She mailed it on her way home from work.

This is what good people do. If you see something, say something and Ms. Jordan Fuentes had seen enough to scare the beJesus out of her.

She figured that would be the end of it. I mean, she had done what any reasonable person would have done in that situation with the limited amount of specific information she had. She had alerted the authorities. She had done her civic duty. It was time for someone higher up on the food chain than she to have a crack at this thing.

A week or so went by. She had other stories to work on. Their company and its publication were beginning to take off. They were hiring new staffers and bloggers almost daily. Lucas and his devil worship quickly faded from memory.

She was working ten-hour days at the office. She could work from home, as many did, but she hated taking her work home with her. When you work from home, there isn't any difference between the two. She figured home is where you relax and try to forget about work.

She saw the envelope sticking outside her doorway in her condo. It was the same letter she had mailed to homeland security a few weeks ago. A chill went down her spine. There was something very wrong here.

She never put her address on the envelope. How the hell did this letter get here?

A question worth its weight in gold. She opened the letter. It was from someone named Agent Kerrigan at Homeland Security. She opened the letter up. It had words and drawings scribbled all over it. At the bottom, it read very clearly:

Mind your own business bitch!

She threw the letter down then grabbed it and ripped it up. She was shaking all over now. What the hell was happening? It was like she was in some sort of bad dream. Some kind of nightmare. She also became convinced that something very bad was going to happen in Clear Lake.

Something that had to be stopped, one way or another....even if she was the one who had to stop it.

She called her boss and told her that she had to fly back to Texas for the free concert. Lucas had specifically asked for her to attend. She said to have fun and please take some pictures with Lucas and his band.

She found a flight leaving that night from LAX to Houston. She packed a few things, drove to the airport, and parked her car. She texted Tomas, asking him if he wanted to go. She was practically begging him to go. She did not want to do this alone. She was shocked by his response. She almost dropped her phone when she read it.

Satan says we are all just maggots on a carcass. Maggots on a carcass. Maggots on a carcass. Maggots on a carcass. Maggots on a carcass. Maggots on a carcass. Maggots on a carcass.

The text filled up her entire screen. He just kept on sending the same text, over and over and over. She kept deleting them as fast as he was sending them. She was holding back her tears, trying not to lose it when she checked in at the airport. She got her ticket and went through security. She finally boarded at about 11 PM. The plane was almost empty. She had a whole row to herself. A stewardess came by and asked her if she needed anything.

"I guess a pillow would be nice," she said.

The stewardess's smile quickly evaporated. Jordan was almost taken aback by what she was seeing.

"Honey, I'm not your house nigger. If you want a pillow, get it yourself," she said very coldly. When she held up her hand, Jordan saw the pentagram. She tried to hide in the seat as the plane took off. She closed her eyes and tried to forget about the nightmare she had found herself in. Each passing hour just seemed to get more and more bizarre. People she had known for years, Like Tomas, were now complete strangers. Just how many people out there worshiped Satan? It was like he had his own shadow army, lurking in the darkness, just waiting for the right moment to strike.

Just how many of these crazy bastards were there? How high up did they go?.....just what exactly was going to happen in Clear Lake a few days from now? The more she thought about it, the more nervous she became. At one point, she thought she was going to have to use the barf bag in front of her. It was that bad.

How many of these people are there? How many have been drafted into Satan's army? A more disturbing question would be: *How many of them volunteered to be in his army?*

Her plane landed in Houston. She got a rental car and headed out to Clear Lake. She had no idea what she was doing or how she was going to do it. If something horrible was going to happen, how was she going to stop it? Who would she tell? What would she say? There was no way to warn others without severing her relationship with Lucas. That could be very detrimental to her career. There were plenty of other bloggers and hipsters just waiting to take her place. She began to wonder if this just wasn't all in her head. She really had no proof of anything and the proof she did have just told her he can't remember saying anything about it. It wasn't exactly a whole lot to go on.

The drive from Houston to Clear Lake was about two and a half hours. When she pulled off the highway for the Clear Lake exit, she saw a sign for the free concert. He was going to hold it in the park. She drove by and saw a crew working on the staging. Another crew was working on the lighting and electrical. She had never seen so much activity in the town. There were a bunch of vehicles with out-of-state license plates. The two motels in town were completely booked. She thought she would drive home and surprise her mom, only to find out that she had been called into work. Her house was completely empty. She had a hunch, nothing more. She knew she had to get another interview with Lucas, but it was going to be difficult. She had racked up a big bill already and didn't have anything to show for it. She did have one idea, to find one of her

ex-boyfriends who had joined the Clear Lake Police Dept. His name was Chris. She hadn't spoken to him in years. She wasn't certain he was still a cop. She drove over to his parent's house. His mother answered the door. She gave Jordan a big hug. He still lived at home. His mother said he was working and gave her his number. She called him and he told her he was on duty but would love to meet her. Chris said he would swing by his house and pick her up.

Their meeting was awkward. They hadn't seen one another in almost ten years, but there were no hard feelings. She just hoped he wouldn't get the wrong idea as to why she wanted to meet him.

"Jordan.....how the hell are you?" he said, hugging her.

"Back home. I'm covering Lucas's concert for my magazine."

"Come on, hop in. I'm supposed to be working....or at least look like I am." he said.

Jordan hopped in the front seat of his cruiser. The conversation was natural, not awkward at all. Chris was a good guy and she genuinely cared for him, but he wanted to settle down and at age 18, that was the last thing in the world she wanted. She just hoped she didn't break his heart beyond the point of repair. He was going to make some woman very happy, it just wasn't her.

"I took the sergeant's test. Never in a million years did I think I would be a cop when we were together. It's about the only job in this town that pays a decent wage."

"You look like you're doing pretty well for yourself."

"I live at home and take care of the folks.....or they take care of me. One way or another we're taking care of each other. So, you're here to cover that concert."

"Yeah.....about that."

She told him everything, from what the drummer had told her, to the pentagram in his mansion, the strange letter from Homeland Security, to the weird stewardess on the plane. Everything about it was just plain weird.

"Wow.....I always wondered just how in the hell a putz like Lucas Frost managed to become so famous. Now we know.....he sold his soul to the devil." said Chris, smiling.

"I know it sounds insane.....but if you had seen that pentagram.....maybe you wouldn't think it's so insane either."

"Well, we are taking every precaution for the concert. We have county sheriffs, and DPS working as well. All in all, we have over a hundred cops assigned to this concert. DPS is stopping everyone at the highway and won't let anyone in without a local ID. They even sent in bomb-sniffing dogs just to be sure. We removed every trash can. The sheriff wants this concert to go off without a hitch."

"That's good. I feel a lot better, knowing you're working. I don't know, the last few weeks.....they've almost felt like a bad dream. Like I was living a nightmare. I was probably

just imagining all this in my head. Even if Lucas does worship the devil, it doesn't mean he's going to do something evil at this concert."

She got a text from Tomas. Her heart nearly skipped a beat as she read it. The drummer, Seth Prince, who had warned her about the concert was found dead in his home. Police suspect it was an overdose.

"Oh my God," she said quietly.

"What?"

"That guy who tried to warn me. They just found him dead. Looks like he overdosed."

"That's what happens to junkies."

"Yeah.....that's certainly possible. Either that or he was murdered to keep him quiet. If he told me about what is going to happen, maybe he told other people as well."

"Jordan, if he was a junkie, he was on borrowed time. They're just one fix away from kicking the bucket.

Can't blame the poor bastard for wanting to have the last dance with old scratch.

"What did you just say?"

"I didn't say anything."

"Yes, you did. Something about the last dance with old scratch?"

"Jordan, I think you're hearing things." He said looking at her kinda funny.

Just like that, their dynamic changed. He no longer looked at her like his ex-girlfriend he wanted to hump one last time.....

He was genuinely glad he dodged a bullet with her.....cause this chick is riding the crazy train.

Their conversations were now just pointless small talk. Jordan began to question even her own sanity. What if she was losing it? What if she was slowly losing her sanity. Her aunt had to be committed when she was her age. Clearly, mental illness runs in the family.

What if Jordan had caught the crazies?

He dropped her off at her mom's house and gave her a half-hearted goodbye. He told her to keep in touch, but she knew once he drove off, that would be the last she ever saw of him. It was probably for the best. It was a chapter of her life that needed to be closed.

Problem was, she still had no answers. She drove to the community center and met her old boss, Annabel, who ran it and all the programs.

"Jordan Fuentes, is that really you?"

"It is. I'm back.....just for a few days."

"I'll take whatever I can get. Get over here and hug me." said Annabel.

They spent the next half hour catching up. Jordan knew she had to be very careful with Annabel. She had a big heart but also had a big mouth. Between her and Chris, she could quickly find herself labeled a whacko in no time.

"I get updates from your mom all the time. How do you like LA?"

"It's crazy. Sometimes I can't believe I'm actually living there, you know?"

"Well, just as long as you never forget where your real home is. So, why are you in town?"

"I'm covering the Lucas Frost concert for my magazine. They're hoping I can score another interview with him."

"Gosh, I never in a million years would have thought that boy would be the success story from this town. He was just kind of a.....well, kind of a nothing. I know that's a terrible thing to say, but.....well, it's true."

"Clearly, we didn't know him very well. I've been to his mansion in Malibu. He has two thousand dollar bottles of wine in his basement. I'd say he's definitely made it." said Jordan.

"So, did you see anyone in town yet?"

"I saw Chris. Have a hard time believing he's a cop. I used to beat him up in high school. Now he's a whole head taller than me and a hundred pounds heavier."

"I always thought you would be the one to make it big when you left here. You always had a good head on your shoulders."

"Anna.....I guess maybe it's because I've seen things in LA and I read things on the internet, but I'm worried about this concert. I'm worried that some whacko might try and do something crazy. Like plant a bomb or something. I know it sounds insane but I cover news stories like that all the time. It only takes one whacko to ruin everything."

"They have very tight security. Going to be a lot of cops on duty at the concert. It's Clear Lake, not Los Angeles. I think we'll be fine."

"Yeah, you're probably right. I think I'm just overreacting."

"Go on home and take a nap or something. Relax.....show up tonight at the concert and have a good time. You should be there, this is your hometown too."

"I could use a good nap. It was great seeing you again Anna."

They gave one another a final hug goodbye and Jordan walked the mile and a half back to her house. She called her mom, who said she wouldn't be home until late. Jordan turned on the TV. She felt her eyelids getting heavy and within a few minutes was drifting in and out of consciousness. When she finally did fall asleep, it was intense, REM sleep. The kind that nourishes your body."

It was only a brief, very vivid dream. She sees these two men wearing white suits and respirators. They quietly go about their work. They have two large drums set up behind one of the stages. They finish just as quickly as they started. Jordan isn't sure what is in those drums, but whatever it is it's pure evil. It's the devil in a 55-gallon drum.

Jordan sat up immediately and rubbed her eyes. She had been asleep for less than an hour, but it was enough. She had to stop this concert one way or another. She just had no idea how she was going to go about doing it. She had to get close to Lucas. It was now or never.

She drove over to Lucas's mother's house. Much to her amazement, she was actually home and hadn't left yet for the concert. She had no idea what to say, she just had to come up with something and fast, cause the clock was ticking. She rang the doorbell and immediately recognized his mother, albeit aged since she last saw her. Everyone in Clear Lake knew one another. Years could go by and they would pick up right where they left off.

"Jordan.....how are you, come on in." said his mother.

"Mrs. Frost, it's nice to see you."

"Knock off that Mrs. Frost business and call me Sarah. Lucas told me he re-connected with you. Just between us ladies, he had like the biggest crush on you in high school."

"Yeah, he told me. Hey, I have something for him. It's stupid, I mean I know how busy he is, but I was kind of hoping he could sign my yearbook. I have everyone's signature in the school but his. Not sure how that happened."

"Say no more. I'll text him and have him meet you. The concert doesn't start for a few more hours. Everyone in town has been trying to see him. He wants to say hi to everybody, but he just doesn't have the time. I'm sure he'll make the time for you."

As she turned, Jordan saw the pentagram necklace she was wearing. She returned a minute later.

"I told him you'd be on your way. He said to come to the office at the community center. You better get going before the cops shut everything down.....Jordan you are even more beautiful than the last time I saw you." she said and pulled her in for a hug. She then reached up and kissed Jordan on the lips. She quickly pulled away, surprised and somewhat shocked.

"Thanks for everything," she said and quickly let herself out.

This nightmare is getting worse by the minute. I've got to find Lucas and try and talk to him.....if that's even possible at this point.

She drove to the community center and was lucky enough to find a parking space. She knew the area would be closed off very soon and she wasn't even worried about how she was going to get out. Right now, she needed to find Lucas.

He found Annabel who told her that Lucas was waiting for her in her office.

"He snuck in, wearing a disguise. You know between you and me, I think the boy has the hots for you."

"You don't say. Thanks, I just need him to sign my yearbook."

"Go ahead, he's in my office just waiting for you."

She walked into Annabel's office and saw Lucas sitting at her desk.

"Hey, kid?"

"Hi, thanks for meeting me."

"Where's your boyfriend?"

"Oh....we broke up. I guess I'm just not ready to settle down."

"Sorry to hear," he said

"Lucas, just listen to me for a second please."

As in put your goddamn phone down type of attention

"What's up?" he asked, moving in closer.

She told him everything. She didn't leave anything out. His expression changed. He didn't look angry, or upset.....more like.....*hurt*. When she finished, she was trembling badly."

"So, you thought we were going to do what exactly?"

"I don't know, something horrible, like kill a bunch of people. Look, before you judge me, just understand that the last two weeks of my life have been.....weird, very, very weird. I'm seeing pentagrams and Satanists everywhere I look."

She could tell by his expression, that he was completely dumbfounded, as in a loss for words.

"I saw that room in your basement. The one with the giant pentagram," she said.

Lucas just rolled his eyes.

"Our cameraman also is a director. He was using my house for his next film. He asked me if he could make some kind of a devil's altar or something down there, so I told him fine, just as long

as he returns it the way it was when he found it. You really think I'm a Satanist? Jesus, I mean, I know I'm not perfect, but Jordan.....that's fucked up."

Jordan was still shaking. She must have looked like an idiot. Still, she had to get it off her chest and let the chips fall where they may.

There it was. Her entire career had just been flushed down the toilet, along with whatever dignity she had. Her worst fear was looking like a complete idiot in front of somebody famous and just going to pieces. Her nightmare had come true and then some.

Lucas just shook his head. He got up to leave. He yanked the yearbook out of her hands, scribbled something, and walked by her, without saying a word.

She sat down on Annabel's desk and just started sobbing. She blew it, big time. The look on his face was one of both anger and sadness. It was then that she realized that the ladies had been correct all along.

Lucas still had a big crush on her. He could be with anyone he wanted and he just wanted to be with her.

She was angrier with herself. She had to fix this, she just didn't know how. She walked back to her rental car, still carrying her yearbook. She didn't even open it up. She drove back to her mom's house. She had gone to see their aunt in Houston. She wanted to go to the concert, but her aunt was not doing very well and needed some help, according to her mother. She had the trailer all to herself. Right now, she just wanted her mother. She wanted to sip hot chocolate and cry in her arms like she did when she was a kid. She turned on the radio, that was carrying the concert. Lucas sounded better than ever. She made herself a cup of tea and sat down. She looked over at her yearbook and thought she might look at what he had written, albeit ten years too late. She almost dropped her teacup when she saw it.

We're all just maggots on a carcass. Maggots on a carcass.....but you Jordan, are the prettiest maggot all.

She heard the music disappear from the radio. There seemed to be silence and confusion, followed by screaming over the radio. She turned the radio off and ran out to her car.

She didn't want to stick around to see what had happened. Cause the devil had just come to Clear Lake, Texas and he was going to have some fun.