

# The Corn Maze

By Leina Brown

It had been a normal day in October, lots of Halloween decorations and more. Consumed with thoughts about the upcoming Halloween party Kayla was hosting on Saturday, Katie didn't feel much like herself. The most talked about event at the party was a massive corn maze that everyone looked forward to each year. Although absolutely terrified of corn mazes, Katie knew she would have to tough it out as Kayla always wanted to go in it together. Despite the comfort of having her friend with her in the corn maze Katie always feared getting lost in it... As Saturday suddenly arrived Katie hesitated going, but still decided to go. Halfway through the party everyone began migrating towards the corn maze. Hesitantly, Katie paired up with Kayla and they entered the maze. Throughout the maze, sounds of screams and the wind blowing against the corn stalks kept Katie on edge. With chills on her neck and fear in her heart she struggled to keep going. Kayla laughing and enjoying the scares ran ahead and around a corner. As Katie turned the corner herself, she heard absolute silence and realized Kayla was gone. "Where did she go?" she thought. Panicking, her heart racing and barely able to catch her breath, Katie began running through the maze hoping to find her friend, or better yet, a way out.

Slipping on a rogue cob of corn, she fell to the ground. Looking up she noticed feet standing a few feet off the path within the corn stalks. Someone was there with her. She tried to get up but couldn't move her ankle. The figure stepped on her ankle increasing the pain and keeping her immobilized. The figure moved in grabbing her feet. All she could let out was a small shriek. She knew that there was always something in corn mazes. The figure pulled something out of the stalks, A SAW! As he brought the saw towards her she felt a sudden sharp pain in her legs. As she tried to lift her leg, she realized she couldn't move her legs at all. The figure ran off leaving Katie to lay there awake until she bled out. The figure began planning his next victim... Kayla.

Who would warn her?

# Prey County

By Khloe Lewis

"Hello Friend!" a friendly voice exclaimed in the intercom, "Welcome to Prey County! This is where you can find one of the smallest populations in the country." the woman speaking through the intercom explained with great enthusiasm. "Here there are lots of different species of prey animals. They all come in different sizes, so hunters don't mind living here." The voice seemed to be emphasizing the prey here. "I think you'll love the food, It's to die for! Oh, also, you've got to watch out for the woods. Please refrain from entering it. We cannot guarantee your safety." Her enthusiasm didn't falter one bit as though it was just another little tip for the people entering. "The residents are not very friendly towards newcomers, but don't worry. They'll warm up to you!" That was worrying. "I don't suppose you've been through self-defense training, have you? Not to worry! You'll be fine, I hope. Anyway, I hope you like your stay here in Prey County! Ta ta!" And just like when her voice appeared it was gone again.

We started up our car again and set off down the road. It didn't take us long to start seeing excess amounts of roadkill. The kind where it was still alive after being hit. The animals were on the side of the road, and decaying. Flies swarmed them, but there were no vultures or any other species of birds that would flock toward a rotting corpse.

As we got to town there still was no clue of any birds. It was just a flat field miles and miles away from any other roads. We crept up along the dirt road to a small town. It was an ordinary town. Miles away from any other civilization kind of a town. It's like a serial killer's playground. Plain and old-fashioned that's miles away from any other contact. We really couldn't stop emphasizing how far away this was, and how eerie the silence of the fields were. They said there was a lot of wildlife here, but there weren't even any birds.

As we slowly crept into town the people on the sidewalk stopped and glanced at us as they started whispering. We stopped at the local gas station. We got out to stretch our legs and get gas.

One person approached me, "Hello newcomer! How are you on this fine day?" A friendly old man was walking up to us. "We are so happy to have newcomers. We don't get very many. You're the first to stop by this whole year."

Fifteen minutes later we found a cozy-looking hotel. The reception was nice and everyone was friendly. We got up to our hotel room at the top of the building. Room 102 was clean and tidy. There weren't any complimentary things for us when we got in.

There was just a letter. The letter read, "Hello newcomer! You're staying at the local hotel in Prey County where everything is prey. Here we have a tradition that whenever someone stays at the hotel we play a little game of rabbit and wolf tag. Here's the catch: this starts at night, and we're always the wolves (you're the rabbits). We chase you when the night comes and you have to run across the miles of land separating us from the other cities. If you get to a city before we catch you, you win! But if you don't get to a city and we catch you, you lose. We wish you the best of luck. One more thing before this letter ends: Here at Prey County everything is prey. From: You're trustworthy hotel managers.

This was quite disturbing because it was already almost sundown. We weren't quite sure whether the letter was some sick prank or something else.

At sundown, there was a knock on our door. "Hello, I'm one of the staff here. I'm just here to inform you that you have to hand over your cell phones and car keys to the front desk on your way out. Also, you should start running. We've decided to give you a small head start in our game of tag." The woman started walking away. We thought this was supposed to be a sick kind of joke, ... but that was our first mistake. She sounded like the lady speaking through the intercom. We decided to go to sleep and try to sleep it off, but they wouldn't let us. I woke up to the feeling of a warm liquid soaking the bed. The dark liquid was sticky and it was body temperature. I looked at my partner and was horrified. There was a knife sticking out of their neck. They had a horrified look on their faces.

I got up off of the bed frantically sticking to the sheets. There was another letter, "We told you to turn in your keys, and cellphone, and even gave you a head start. You didn't follow the rules. Rabbits who don't play by the rules are to be punished." As I finished reading the letter I was pushed forward by the force of something sharp in my back. Someone had thrown an ax at me through the window of the top of the building. There was glass strewn around my body and I couldn't get up.

Everything went black

# Freak Show

## By Aryana Zuganos

I was in my room, late at night, looking online for places that were abandoned in Princeton, New Jersey. My friends and we weren't going to have a party this year for Halloween. Instead, we wanted to explore some creepy, abandoned place. I moved to Los Angeles after my father and mother got a divorce. But now, I'm going back. I missed my friends, and my mother wasn't taking the best care of me. I kept on scrolling until I had found the perfect place, The Showman's Abandoned Fairground. I had a small smile on my face. It was right on the outskirts of Princeton, New Jersey.

I grabbed my duffel bag from under my bed. I started to pack my stuff. There was a small scraping noise behind me. I turned around, and I saw my mother standing behind me with another cigarette in her hand.

"Where do you think you're going?" she asked.

"I'm leaving. I have made zero friends here, and I actually had friends back in Princeton." I said coolly. "And I miss Dad."

"Cassia, you know what happened back there. You-"

"Yeah! I do! And I like it better there than here!" I yelled. I grabbed my bag and slammed the door.

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I stepped out of the plane and onto the smooth, marble floor of the airport.

"Cass! You're here!" a familiar voice yelled. I turned. It was my boyfriend, Sam. I ran toward him and wrapped my arms around his neck.

"I missed you." I said. "I found the perfect place for Halloween." I pulled back.

"Oh? What is it?" he asked.

"The Showman's Abandoned Fairground." Evelyn said behind me. I turned. "You messaged me. And we got 2 other people coming with us."

"That's great! Who are they?" I asked.

"Let's see. You, Sam, me," Evelyn listed. "Mike and Jeremy."

"I remember them. They were in my History class." I said.

That night, we all went to the gates. The cold wind was nipping at my face and whipping through my dark hair. I could've sworn I heard faint laughter and figures in the distance. Mike finished prying off the rusted lock, and the gates opened with an ear-piercing screech. Everyone went in different directions, screaming and laughing.

"Hey! Look! I'm gonna fall off!" Jeremy was messing around on the carousel. The horses had chipped paint and rusted metal. Evelyn wanted to climb to the top of the Ferris Wheel, but not all the way to the top. We climbed until I heard a gasp beneath me.

"What the heck is that?" Jeremy asked. Mike looked down, slipped and fell toward the earth. I could hear the sickening thud of his body hitting the ground. There was a girl, wearing a cat mask, staring up at us, her head cocked at an unnatural angle.

"Okay. That's creepy." I whispered. More came. Four more. They bent over Mike's body, and I heard tearing and shredding sounds.

When they were done, one of them looked up. "Come down! We just want to play...It's...been a very long time..." the boy in a dog mask said.

Everyone looked at each other with terrified looks in their eyes.

"We should run." Sam said.

"Aren't we gonna get ripped to shreds like Mike?" Jeremy asked, on the verge of having a panic attack.

"Just do it, you idiot!" Evelyn yelled. We all dropped to the ground. I hit the ground and I saw everyone sprinting in different directions.. I bumped into someone and fell. I looked up.

"Time to join the freak show." The girl in the cat mask was holding a mask that resembled a panda. She grabbed me, and forced on the mask. And everything went dark. *Destroy all of them.* A voice in my head said. *Kill them all.* I opened my eyes. I was one of them.