

## Writer's Block

*Lily's eyes widened in fear as the creature approached, its fangs dripping crimson blood onto the carpet. Her hands trembled as she watched it coming closer and closer...*

Kianne frowned, and then ripped the page from her notebook, crumpling it into a small ball. Around her, similar crumpled pages littered the small table like snow. Kianne glared at them in frustration. The notebook was beginning to feel rather frustrated as well, though it would never say so.

She sighed and took another sip of her mocha. It was much too sweet for mocha, but she drank it anyway, gazing out of the tall Alchemy Café windows.

"You drink too much coffee."

Kianne jumped in surprise, and a large quantity of mocha spurted out of her nose. Coughing loudly, she reached out and punched in the direction of the voice.

"I told you to stop doing that!" She cried, as her fist connected with the leg of a girl with short, black hair.

"You'd think you'd start to expect it by now." The girl said, sitting down in a chair on the other side of the table. Kianne glared at her, wiping spilled mocha off her notebook. The notebook merely sat, even though its feelings were now as damaged as its brown-stained pages.

"What do you want, Ally?" Kianne demanded, brushing her long, blonde hair out of her face.

"I just wanted to see how you were doing." Ally said, stealing a marshmallow off of Kianne's saucer.

"Horribly," Kianne said, gesturing to the crumpled papers. "I might as well kill Lily and get it over with."

"I see." Ally commented, eyeing the second marshmallow. "Werewolf or dragon?"

“Werewolf. Then it’ll be nice and bloody.” Kianne said, staring out at the tall gallery sculpture as if hoping it would bring her some sudden streak of brilliance. None came.

“Writer’s block sucks, eh?”

Kianne cringed. She hated admitting it, but it was true. The notebook, on the other hand, was already perfectly aware of the horrible writing affliction, and would have easily admitted it.

“Maybe you’re not meant to write fantasy.” Ally commented, scooping a spoonful of foam from the top of the mocha.

“Not meant to write fantasy?” Kianne asked incredulously. “Don’t be ridiculous.”

“Well, maybe you should try something else for a while.” Ally said. “Maybe some normal fiction, or even non-fiction.”

Kianne nearly choked on her coffee again. The idea of her even attempting a non-fiction piece was almost repulsive. She had always written fantasy stories. The notebook, however, rather liked the idea of something other than dragons and magic being scribbled on its pages.

“It just feels like I’m...missing something. But I don’t know what it is.” Kianne said. Ally looked thoughtful for a moment, then grabbed the sodden notebook.

“Come on.” She said, standing up.

“Where are we going?” Kianne asked, grabbing her bag from the back of her chair.

“We’re going to try something.” Ally said, stuffing the notebook into her own bag. This did not sit well with the notebook, or Kianne, for that matter.

“Hey, give that back!” She cried, reaching for the bag. But it was too late. Ally pushed her bag behind her back, out of reach. She then grabbed Kianne’s wrist and pulled her out of her chair.

Kianne did not resist as Ally dragged her out of the Art Gallery’s café, though she made her annoyance clear. The same could not be said for the poor notebook, which made no sound as it rolled around in Ally’s bag.

“Come on.” Ally insisted, pulling Kianne past the Gallery’s metal sculpture.

The pair continued walking, Kianne paying no attention to the direction in which Ally was leading her. Her thoughts kept drifting back to her notebook, and, inevitably, her unfinished story. She didn't even notice as they turned and entered the Botanic Gardens.

"Alright, here we are." Ally said, sitting down on a bench near the Peacock Fountain. "White noise, a surefire writer's block cure."

"I don't have writer's block!" Kianne said untruthfully. "I just don't know what to write next."

Ally pulled the notebook out of her bag and waved it in front of her. Kianne snatched it excitedly and sat down next to Ally. The notebook waited nervously.

"Write something." Ally instructed. Kianne flipped open the notebook, passing over the coffee-stained pages. At last she found a clean sheet, and pressed her pencil to it.

*Lily blinked.*

The notebook groaned inwardly, having heard enough about this 'Lily'.

*The sun was shining brightly, stinging her eyes.*

Alright, the notebook thought. That's not a bad start. But to its immense surprise, Kianne scribbled it out and started again.

*The rain was pouring down, as if the sky were crying.*

This didn't make any sense to the notebook. Obviously Kianne felt the same, as she ripped the page out and crumpled it.

"But that was good!" Ally exclaimed, taking the page and flattening it out.

"Forget it." Kianne said. "I'll never be able to write anything."

"Yes you will." Ally said encouragingly, handing back the wrinkled page. Kianne scowled at it.

"I'm going home." Kianne decided, closing the notebook. She stood up.

"Fine." Ally said dully. "You're still coming with us to *The Great Gatsby*, right?"

"Of course I am." Kianne said, nodding. Ally smiled.

"See ya."

Kianne turned and walked out the gate down Rolleston Avenue. She pulled out her iPod, hoping that some music might bring the inspiration she was lacking. But not even Lily Allen could tell her what to write next.

All of a sudden she had crashed into a tall blonde boy walking out of Christ's Collage. The papers he was carrying scattered on the sidewalk.

"I'm so sorry!" Kianne exclaimed, bending down to pick up the dropped papers.

"It's fine, really." The boy said, reaching for the notebook. Kianne handed him his papers.

"Um, here." She said quietly. The boy was still looking down at the notebook. Then he looked up, and smiled.

"Mocha bowl, extra hot, extra foam." He said, grinning.

"Pardon?" Kianne asked, confused.

"That's what you always order at the café. You're that girl that keeps leaving crumpled pages all over the tables." The boy said.

"Oh." Kianne said. Then she was struck by something. "How do you know that?" She demanded.

"I work there on Wednesdays and Fridays." The boy said, holding out the notebook. "Here."

"Thanks." Kianne said, taking it and brushing off the dirt. The notebook appreciated this, even though it didn't really change its overall condition.

"I'm Spencer, by the way." The boy said, pushing his papers into his bag.

"I'm Kianne." Kianne said quietly. She brushed a bit of hair out of her face.

"Your writing is really good." Spencer said, nodding to the notebook. Kianne blinked.

"I read some of the crumpled up ones." Spencer explained. "I don't know why you didn't keep them, I thought they were great."

"Really?" Kianne asked, surprised. Spencer nodded.

"Well I, um, I..." Kianne stuttered, blushing slightly.

“Anyway, I got to get going.” Spencer said, turning toward the collage. “See you around, eh?”

Kianne nodded slowly, watching as he turned and ran back towards the dining hall. As soon as he was out of sight she banged her forehead with her notebook. The notebook did not really approve of this, but said nothing.

But as she stood there in the middle of the sidewalk, she realized what her story was missing. Quickly she opened the notebook and began to write. The notebook, recognising the new idea, relished in the feeling of pencil against paper.

Kianne read her words, satisfied with herself.

*Lily stared at the spot where the boy had stood, feeling rather dumbstruck. Not ten seconds ago he had been talking to her, clearly interested. But as she replayed the scene in her head, she realised how stupid she had sounded. The most she had managed was gibberish.*

*She shook her head. There would be another chance, she knew it...*

The notebook couldn't have been more pleased.