

Heart Beat, by Eda

The heart monitor began to wait longer between each beat and I could sense that my blood circulation was slowing. My eyes began to flutter closed and I gripped the bed tightly, my nails puncturing the thin fabric. My parent's voices began to muddle and their words became a swampy mess of syllables. I tried to solely focus on the colors swimming through my eyelids and the distant beeps of the monitor. Then the noises came to an abrupt halt and the world went black.

I woke in a cold room. The bed was dusty and the pillow was stiff, as if they hadn't been touched in a while. A dresser stood near the doorway, a pair of untouched jeans laid across the top. The whole area seemed vaguely familiar. Realization hit me like a freight train. This was my room. "I hadn't been here for months," I thought warily. Why wasn't I in the hospital bed?

I began to form a twitch in my right eye, so I brought up a hand to rub it, faltering at the sight of my arm. I looked... healthy. My arm wasn't the dirty greyish pale it had become over months of lying in a bed without going outside. It was a clear tan colour, free for any speck of dirt. Mouth agape, I noted that my fingernails were too, in pristine condition.

Slowly I eased out of bed expecting to fall over or at least be sore in the leg from the lack of exercise. Instead, I sprung out of bed like a jaguar and made it to the door without tripping. While peeking out the doorway, someone plodded passed me in a long black dress. Following them down the stairs onto the street, I peered up at their face and stopped in my tracks. It was my mother. But why was she crying?

"Mom?" I asked gently. She continued her way along the sidewalk.

"Mom!" I repeated louder, waving my hand in her face. I got no reaction. Had my mother gone both deaf and blind?

I gave up trying to get her attention and turned to the man lumbering next to her.

"Dad! It's me! Amelia!" They refused to acknowledge me. I felt my cheeks heat up; why were they ignoring me?

We continued to make our way uptown, my parents in the front as I marched angrily behind them. Eventually we entered some form of garden. A quick look and the rows of gravestones told me I was in a cemetery.

We reached a small but growing crowd that had gathered around something. I shoved passed various arms and legs to reach the center of the attention. A casket was being lowered into a grave.

I caught sight of the tombstone with the name of the mysterious corpse. The sniffles and sobbs turned to a rushing torrent in my ears.

There, carved into the stone was my name:

Amelia Thorne