



2011

m'aIDer {help me!}

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Recommended Citation

Morse, Sarah (2011) "m'aIDer {help me!}," *Cedarville Review*: Vol. 14 , Article 23.
Available at: <https://digitalcommons.cedarville.edu/cedarvillereview/vol14/iss1/23>

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Keywords

Nonfiction

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About the Contributor (Optional)

Sarah Morse is a junior English major at Cedarville University. She enjoys pastels and mangoes, particularly in May. She has recently discovered her favorite story, *The Little Prince* -- so “ask yourself, ‘Has the sheep eaten the flower yet or not?’ And you’ll see how everything changes...”

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Friday 25 May 2007. Alec Kreider sat at his desk staring at me with a combination of suspicion and surprise. He is not going to sign... the barely formed words flickered across my mind. "You don't want me to sign it. I'm not a nice person," he mumbled before reaching out and taking my yearbook. Later, I read his nearly illegible black scribbles, bewildered that he had such low self-esteem: "Dear Sarah, I don't know you very well, but the best advice I can give is have fun in life, you only live once. Alec Kreider."

September 2006. Alec Kreider always wore black, always wore jeans, and always wore a silver men's watch that completely engulfed his slender right wrist. His eyes were black, and so was his hair. I have a picture of my fourth grade class, which he was in, and when Alec was nine he had clear blue eyes, nerdy round wire glasses, and straw blond hair that sat upon his head like a mushroom. I do not want to remember him.

Nobody ever took his cruel, cynical remarks seriously. He spoke, voice monotone, with an edge of sarcasm that flowed from his mouth like snake venom. I don't remember exactly what he used to say, I only know he was comically harsh: he viewed humanity as weak, pathetic and god as absent, I'm sure. Everyone would roll their eyes and laugh, even my teacher, even me. Typical Alec. I didn't realize then that sarcastic words are lined with truth. Slurs, and jokes, and sarcasm spoken flatly, with a coy smile, are hauntingly dangerous.

Alec Kreider was Kevin Haines's best friend. What would motivate a sixteen year old boy to murder his best friend, to murder a family? I wonder, when Kevin's sister Maggie ran to call 911, if she knew that her brother was dead, and her parents were breathing for the last time. She was only 20 years old! On Sunday, May 12th at 2:30 am, her life shattered with the energy and irreversible precision of an avalanche. I closed my eyes and the crime repeated itself like a silent film in my mind: the bloody knife, Kevin lying dead in the hallway, stabbed 17 times in the chest, confusion. Looking back, I wonder if these musings were a twisted way of clinging to the self-pity that often results from feeling victimized and shaken from the weight of loss, even if it was not my own loss.

I don't have many memories of Kevin, and looking for him in my imagination is like flipping through an old scrapbook of saffron stained images. They are fading with time, sticking together, and eroding.

Dear Kevin,

I used to wonder how a loving God could forgive murderers. Sometimes I don't want God to forgive Alec. January of my freshman year at college I cried at the injustice of your death. I cried because I didn't know how to forgive Alec. I cried because I never really knew you.

I'm writing you because I would want to be remembered. It has been four years since your murder, and you have not been forgotten, not forgotten, not forgotten.

Alles Liebe,

Sarah

28 December 2010. According to a local online news article, Judge David Ashworth denied Alec Kreider's appeal which stated that three consecutive life sentences without parole are "cruel and unjust." Jasper1 wrote the most recent comment on the blog underneath, "they should kill him once then revive him. kill him again and revive him. kill him a third time and decide from there, you know just for fun to see what it's like." Most of the comments are like that, angry. resentful. Kreider is protected from the death penalty because he was 16 when he murdered a family. Furbud articulated, "This guy has a lot of balls. Cruel and Unusual sentence? What he did was Cruel and Unusual...He's lucky to still be alive!" Her comment reminded me of a girl in one of my art classes who said "balls!" repeatedly, every day for a year. It became the new trendy word to say. Maybe she wrote that comment. I used to think forgiveness meant I had to forget. Sometimes I still wonder if I have forgiven Alec.

Nothing of enormous magnitude ever happened at my school. Students graduate, and some go to Harvard on scholarships. It's a safe fashionable school of the rich and pretend rich, of Uggs, and Vera Bradley, and Starbucks, and Tropical Smoothie.

Imagine, the boy who sat behind you in school murdered three people. Imagine you talked with him once, and instead of cloaking truth in sarcasm, he said spoke blatantly: "I am not a nice person." This is reality.

Alec never gave a motive, never gave a motive, never gave a motive...it's barbaric.

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