

The Peculiar Journal of Andrew Stewart.

Grade 10
Fiction ✓
Poetry _____
Nonfiction _____

CHAPTER ONE: ANDREW- MIDDLE OF AUGUST

I watch as my newest dog, Snowball, bleeds out on the pavement of our back yard. I take out my polaroid, snap a picture, work up some tears, and rush inside.

“Mom! Dad! It’s Snowball! She’s- she’s...” I say and audibly gulp back tears.

My parents rush downstairs to see my masterpiece as I slip the polaroid in my back pocket, but they aren’t as satisfied with the result as I am. They scream and call Snowball’s vet, Dr. Kate. Snowball takes her last breath just as my parents hang up the phone and I tell them she’s dead in the most pathetic way I can. I cry loudly for the next few minutes, breaking between sobs to exclaim that it isn’t fair and that Snowball was too young to die.

I tell mom and dad that I need some alone time to grieve. They say that it’s okay and I bolt upstairs into my room and lock the door.

I pull out the polaroid that captured my latest creation. I open my closet and push aside all my clothes to reveal my web. This is where I keep track of all my accomplishments over the years. A sort of trophy case, if you will. I put the picture of Snowball right at the top. My grand prize. Underneath are five missing dog and two cat posters from around the neighborhood, eleven of my personal hamsters that mysteriously got out of their cages, and my turtle I won as a prize in the fourth grade that I smashed with a hammer. All these amazing things I’ve done, yet if anyone saw this I would probably get arrested.

I hear movement and muffled voices downstairs so I cover up my trophies and sneak out of my room to hear what's being said. I listened in to what was the middle of a very heated conversation.

"That's not what I'm saying Kristen. What I'm saying is I'm just concerned. What if these things aren't just accidents?" my dad says in a hushed tone. My mother, on the other hand, was not so subtle.

"Are you implying that our son *purposefully killed* his brand new pet that he had been playing with not two hours earlier?"

"Think about it Kris. Every time we get Andrew a new pet it somehow ends up missing or dead in some sort of gruesome way less than a week later. Don't you find that suspicious?"

"No. I find it unlucky Henry. I refuse to believe that Andrew is murdering his pets for no reason!"

"It's not just our pets either honey! Look at all the other dogs and cats that have gone missing ever since Andrew got back from summer camp!"

My mother goes silent. I think they are starting to catch on to my plans but I'm not sure yet. (I will have to analyze them further to come to a conclusion.)

“I just think,” my dad continues in a calmer voice, “that it’s a little suspicious, is all. And you might be right, he might just have really bad luck with animals, but we need to know that for sure. I think we should find a way to monitor him.”

My mother whispers something similar to a prayer under her breath and I peak over the railing to see her cross herself. As if she’s going to say something she should never say.

“I think you might be right babe. As much as I hate to admit it he does seem a little distant when it comes to emotions and talking to people. Maybe we should have him start keeping a journal?”

“I think that’s a great idea Kar. Let me go grab an extra notebook of mine from downstairs. You go get Andrew from his room and we’ll all have a family chat about it.”

CHAPTER TWO: ANDREW- THE NEXT DAY

After the long chat with my parents that ends in me promising that I will write in my journal every day (and also include how I feel about what I'm writing), I head upstairs and go write in it. I say simple stuff about how hard it is to deal with losing a pet and how sad I am without her etcetera, etcetera . I fill up a whole page and figure that should be good enough. I shut it and place it in my desk. Who knew writing one whole page could take twenty minutes of my time. I know the only reason behind me doing this is so my parents think I'm normal.

I know I'm not normal though. I will always be different, but that's okay. I will always be better as a result. Unlike everyone else I don't have emotions to cloud my decision making and that's why I'm better, and I always will be. It is lonely like this though. I wish people would understand why the way I am is so superior to "being normal". Maybe I should take my parents' own advice. I'm going to write a journal. Not the type they want, but one of my discoveries, hypothesis, and plans that won't be clouded with judgement. This journal will be my next step towards the biggest trophy I will ever win.

This journal will help me plan how to kill a human.

CHAPTER THREE: ANDREW- 3 WEEKS LATER

It's the first day of school and I have already crossed many people off my list of potential victims. No one meets my standards. It has to be the perfect person. It has to be the perfect time. The perfect murder.

It has to be a person that will be missed by people, so it can't be any of the kids that sit by themselves like me. But they can't be missed enough to where people will go looking for them. That eliminates all the jocks and popular girls that hang out with them. I will keep looking because there has to be someone who meets my standards, but I have until March 22nd (that's the deadline I've set for myself) so I should have plenty of time.

I also need a reliable person as an alibi. Someone who will be willing to lie and say I was with them at the time of the murder. As much as I hate to say this- I need a friend. I only have a few people on this list, so I will pick by tomorrow and start a friendship with them to gain their trust. I think I have already chosen the perfect person to be my friend. His name is Coby. He's quiet and comes from a very wealthy family. He seems very easy to manipulate and tell what to do so he should work fine. He could also help me get supplies for my plan since I am poor and cannot afford anything by myself unless I get a job (which is not included in my plan, so I would prefer not to do that).

High school has always been very easy for me. I don't understand why everyone finds it so difficult in the movies. People worry too much about what other people think and don't speak their minds. The world would be a better place if we didn't have the plague of emotions all high school students have. I am in all Advanced Placement classes and it's still very easy for me. I will actually graduate this year if I keep my grades up, and I'm only 16. That's not my goal this year though. My goal this year is to take a human life. Just like a high school student yearns for acceptance and happiness with a significant other, I yearn to feel a person's body go cold and pale as their eyes stare up at me with horror while I stare back at them without showing anything in return. That's what all of humanity deserves for infesting the planet with feelings.

CHAPTER FOUR: ANDREW- 3 MONTHS LATER (LATE DECEMBER)

I believe Coby and I are getting along quite nicely. Everything is falling into place exactly as I planned it. I still haven't picked my victim, but I have my list narrowed down to 6 and by the end of the day it should be down to 4.

I've been hesitant about showing Coby my journal and my web because I've been unsure if I can trust him not to call the police and tell them about my plan. He did, however, ask me about all the missing dogs in my neighborhood and if I thought they were missing or dead. I told him I knew for a fact that they were dead. He just smiled and we had a pleasant conversation about dogs and what happens when they die.

I'm starting to believe Coby is like me. Free of the disease of emotions and empathy. He is the most logical student in my school and when we walk together in the hallway the other kids call us "The Traveling Freak Show" and he doesn't seem to get upset about it. I think my doubt in him has ended. I am going to show him both my web and my journal very soon.

CHAPTER FIVE: COBY- JANUARY 17TH

I walk into Andrew's room for the 52nd time since we have become friends. He says he has to show me something very important so I follow closely behind him as he opens up his closet door. He pushes what few pieces of clothes he has hanging up to reveal a large shrine.

"Oh Andrew, this is so sweet that you would do something like this for your pets that you've lost." I say with a hint of suspicion in my voice. It is sweet to make a shrine, but wouldn't you want one without a picture of it dead?

"Coby, you're an idiot. This isn't a shrine, it's a display of all of my greatest achievements." he says, the pride oozing from his words almost as much as the blood from Snowball's neck.

"This can't possibly be what I think it is," I say with disbelief and awe.

"It's possible, Coby, it's possible. And so is this," he says as he hands me a composition notebook bursting with polaroids of people, abandoned buildings, weapons, and printouts of the human body with red pen marks all over them. The pictures of people are from our school and all of them but 4 have words like *too popular*, *too strong*, *not a challenge* and some just say *unsatisfactory* or *nope* written over their faces. The pictures of the places have addresses written on the back and the weapons have prices on the back and where to find them.

"You've been planning this for a long time, haven't you?"

Andrew nods and flips through the journal, reading out some of his own entries to me. I listen as though my life depends on it. He talks about the perfect crime. It's spectacular. I want to be a part of this more than he could ever imagine.

I tell him that his work is amazing and I tell him of all the thoughts that go through my head. Thoughts that I've never even dreamed of telling anyone before, and oh wow did it feel good to finally say them out loud. As I speak, Andrew's pencil flies through his notebook with new ideas and schemes I know he's never thought of before.

The difference between me and Andrew is that he is very open about not being normal. The art of being the way me and Andrew are is to act like you aren't okay with being different, even if you know it's better that way. Andrew doesn't see me for my full potential. He underestimates me. I can guarantee he will regret that soon enough.

CHAPTER SIX: ANDREW- JANUARY 18TH

I am proud that such a simple minded person such as Coby could find my interests fascinating rather than scary or deranged. He really shows how intelligent some humans can be. That's the main reason he was the first person marked off my victim list. I know now he is like me, but he just simply isn't as dedicated or as gifted as I am. He could never go through with my plan, which is why he plays such a small part in it. I just figured he should at least know just how brilliant my plan was, rather than just be another person who's absolutely clueless. I deserve to have someone to brag my accomplishments to once I have unleashed my revenge on this horrible world.

I have finally chosen my perfect victim. I spent all night without sleep narrowing my list down to just one. Her name is Jessica Carlin. She is the perfect girl. She is in the background of high school. She's not that smart and she's terrible at math, so I will offer to tutor her for a very small fee. She will of course take it, because she thinks she will be able to manipulate me into doing her work for her. This will give me the opening I need for my performance. She has friends, sure, but they won't be overly concerned if she goes missing for a few days. I also heard that her parents are both alcoholics, so they probably won't notice for a few days either. That will give me plenty of time to get rid of her body. My plan is to burn her body by the old abandoned fairgrounds after I have killed her in my most creative way yet. It's all enclosed, so

even if she does manage to escape from me for awhile, she won't be able to leave or figure out where she is. Afterwards, I will drive out to the desert (using Coby's car in case it gets identified) and spread her ashes under my favorite cactus. A perfect resting place for a perfect victim. A thank you to her, in a way, for being such an easy target. Such a small price for her to pay for this stupid and stressful life.

CHAPTER SEVEN: COBY- MARCH 10TH

Andrew has told me to keep his notebook with me for research and safety purposes. He can't afford his parents finding out about his beloved journal so he said he would only let me keep it safe and hidden. He tells me all the time about how much work it is to keep up with writing two journals, especially when one of the journals he's writing is completely made up with fake emotions that his parents monitor. I've been studying it day in and day out. He really doesn't understand how simple it actually is. With the help of Andrew's notes under my possession, I can do what Andrew's been planning for months in the matter of hours. I have the power to take a life.

I have the power to take Andrew's life.

CHAPTER EIGHT: ANDREW- MARCH 21ST

It is the last day of preparation for me and I have rounded up the last bit of supplies needed for tomorrow. My journal reads out my plan as follows:

- Tell Jessica to meet me at my house to help her with math like we planned 2 weeks ago
- After studying, knock her out with my baseball bat (sitting on right of desk)
- Drive her while she's unconscious to the fun house in the old fairgrounds
- Get all of my equipment set up
- Watch as one less emotional wreck is removed from this earth
- Dispose of her body by burning it in the old horse corals
- Take the ashes along with the surrounding dirt out to the desert
- Dispose of her ashes under my favorite cactus (at the base of the mountain)
- Give any remaining jewelry and all of her belongings to her parents claiming she left it with me
- Have Coby as my alibi, saying he was with me during the night of the murder

It's perfect. It's flawless. I am going to head over to Coby's house and figure out exactly what he's going to say so he doesn't mess up my perfect plan by not matching my story.

By the end of tomorrow, there will be one less person's worth of emotions to wreck this earth.

CHAPTER NINE: COBY- MARCH 21ST

Tonight is the night. It has to be tonight. I must beat him. Show him that he's not the genius he thinks he is. He thinks we're reviewing his plan, but his plan is being carried out. It's being carried out by me. The power of life and death is in my hands now, not his. My baseball bat, however, is right under my bed. Just like Andrew's plan, I have the element of my surprise.

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I followed through with it. I rendered him unconscious and took him to the hall of mirrors so he could witness the beauty of my plan from all angles. I cut down his back, following every spinal column with distinct precision using the sharpest tool I could buy in town. I turned him around to face me and held him close as he looked into my eyes. I thought I saw a glimpse of emotion. Maybe it was just death washing over him, maybe shock. I'll never know.

I spread his ashes under his favorite cactus. I followed the map he had hand drawn in his journal to find it. I hope he rests well there. I know that you understand that I had to do this to you; my dearest friend. There can be only one of us.

Goodbye Andrew. I would say that I will be sad that you're gone, but that would be a lie.