

The sky was overcast and the sun appeared only once every so often to remind the earth that it was still there. The breeze moved gently and kept the weather not too chilly yet not too warm. It was an ideal day for most anything. Rain seemed possible but unlikely.

“It is the perfect day for a road trip”, Farkus thought with a warm smile on his face that looked like that of a Weeble toy. Farkus Underwood was traveling cross-country for his oldest daughter’s wedding. Farkus couldn’t have been any happier for the love of his life. Ever since she was a little baby, she always had his heart. Farkus couldn’t help but feel both the pain and sense of achievement that goes along with sending one’s little girl off with the love of her life. As he kept thinking of the upcoming “big day”, tears kept trying to break through. Farkus wiped the tiny tear that managed to make it to his cheek and decided to pull off at the next exit to buy a Coke and candy bar and to re-collect himself before finishing the last leg of the trip.

Farkus pulled off the the next exit he came to and found that the only place to buy a Coke was an old little gas station that looked like a log cabin. The station had antique gas pumps that probably dated back to the 1950’s. Farkus felt a sense of warmth in him as he surveyed the place. He noticed a newer automobile parked to the side of the building and a house a few hundred feet to the left of the station. It seemed like the perfect place to take a quick bathroom break and load up on a Coke and Reeses Cup – his favorite candy.

Farkus entered the gas station and was greeted by the cashier. Farkus guessed that the cashier was most-likely in his early thirties. He seemed to be going bald at a rather young age, but never-the-less, looked rather young in his facial features. Farkus politely greeted the cashier and continued to make his way towards the restroom. The door to the restroom was locked. He assumed the driver to the car parked to the side of the station was using it. As Farkus waited for the person to come out of the restroom, he began to remember the lovely memories of when he was the only man in his daughter’s life- the times before she had started dating and the days before meeting her fiance and making plans to spend her life with him. Farkus was very happy for his daughter, sure; however, he could not get the idea out of his head that he was going to lose her forever. “What if she never visits?” he thought, “what if she prefers her husband’s family and abandons her own?”, he worried.

Farkus had never been one to doubt the nature of people. He had always given them them the benefit of the doubt and assumed the best, regardless of the situation – some said this was both his weakness and strength. Even as his daughter was a growing teenager dealing with the typical temptations of a normal person, he had always had faith that she would do the right thing- and she had. She had learned well and matured into a smart and beautiful young lady and Farkus knew this. It was because he knew this that he wondered why he was so worried about her forgetting about him. He had no reason to, he just did.

Just then, a man came out of the restroom and gave a quick fake smile at Farkus as he walked past him. Farkus entered the restroom, took care of business, dried his tears, and made his way back into the store for his Coke and candy. Farkus headed to the fridge and retrieved a nice cold Coke in a glass bottle – his favorite! There was something about the glass bottle that just made every sip so much better than a plastic bottle or canned Coke. He was delighted and then made his way over to the candy shelf for the second part of his snack. He searched over the candy shelf quickly and was unable to find the candy he so desperately desired. He figured that he must have overlooked it and decided to survey the shelf again. No luck. The Reeses was nowhere to be found. After realizing that this convenience store did not have any Reeses in stock, Farkus began to stare at the shelf. He appeared to not have a thought going through his mind at all. He almost looked like a corpse staring into an endless sky.

It was then that the man from the restroom spotted Farkus and began to worry about him. He walked over towards Farkus and asked “Hey guy, you a’right?” Farkus didn’t respond. The man then waved his hand in front of Farkus’ eyes and said “Yoohoo! You thar or what?” It was at this moment that Farkus slowly turned his head towards the man who then smiled at Farkus. Farkus reached into his pocket, pulled out his pocket knife, and stabbed the man in the face. The man slowly fell to his knees with his face hitting the floor almost immediately after. There was no sound from the man’s mouth fore it was a pefect stabbing. He was dead.

Farkus couldn’t believe what he had done. It scared him, but it also felt nice. He didn’t want to do it again; but he wasn’t regretful for doing it this time. He looked over the shelf to see if the clerk was on to him. The clerk was involved in a crossword puzzle behind the counter and seemed to have no idea of the events that had just happened in the store. Farkus was relieved and decided he must make a quick getaway in order to avoid the authorities and to get back on schedule for his daughter’s wedding.

He took his Coke and went to the counter to pay for it. He was nervous and unable to speak to the unusually friendly clerk. Farkus couldn’t help but worry that the clerk was on to him, that he knew the corpse was lying in front of the candy shelf. Still, he did his best to keep his composure. He paid for his drink and was fixing to head out the door when he saw a police officer pulling into the parking lot. He panicked. He didn’t know what to do. “Should I make a run for it?”, he asked himself. “No that would be too obvious and besides, he will have seen me and my car. Once he spotted the corpse, it would only be a matter of time before he catches up with me”, he answered himself.

There seemed to be no alternative; however, he had to find a way to get away. What was done was done and that’s all there was. He headed out the door, greeted the police officer and headed to the house that was located to the left of the gas station. “I will hide here and prepare an escape”, he said to the cat

on the porch of the house. Farkus had decided that once the police officer spotted the corpse, that he would know who did it and immediately search the area for the most-likely suspect- Farkus. He was more paranoid than ever. "I should have moved my car", Farkus said to the cat, "now he will know that I couldn't have gotten too far and must be in the immediate area!" Farkus just wasn't thinking clearly. But it was too late to do such a thing; he figured the police officer was already on to him. "I have to stick it out and be ready to get rid of the cop when he heads near me" he said to the cat, who just stared at him, innocently licking his paws. Farkus then said to the cat "why am I talking to you anyways? I am not insane yet".

Farkus had searched the perimeter of the house and found a shovel lying against a tree. He hid himself under a grill cover in anticipation for the police officer to begin a search for him near the house. He could see everything that was happening at the gas station through a hole in grill cover. Nothing was happening at all. Nobody else had arrived. Nobody was outside. There was no excitement. "Maybe he didn't find the corpse" he thought, with a glimmer of hope. It was then that he remembered his daughter and the mess he had caused. He was starting to regret his actions more than ever, as he thought of the complications he was going to cause with her wedding. He knew he had to make it without getting caught and he was determined to do so.

Around three minutes had passed and Farkus then noticed the police officer exit the building. Farkus was certain that the police officer was searching for him. The officer headed to his car, got in, and drove away. "He must be going for more officers", he thought. "There is no way I can take out multiple cops; nor would I want to. That is just too much – even for me." Farkus was unsure what to do. He thought maybe he could go back to his car and drive away; but, shot down that idea after he realized it would still just be a matter of time before they caught up with him. He was sure things had just gotten much more complex. He didn't have an answer. There was no way he would go to jail, that was just out of the question. He also was against killing any more people, "that is the reason I am in this mess to begin with", he thought.

As the seconds kept passing, he knew he had to hurry and make a decision of what to do. He knew at any time, police by the carloads would be arriving with search dogs to find him and make him pay for his deeds. Farkus was willing to pay for his deeds and accept the consequences for his sins. It was his daughter that he was worried about. He knew he had ruined her big day. He didn't know how she would ever be able to forgive him. All because of him, she wouldn't be getting the glorious day that she had dreamed about all her life, at least not when she planned for it. Farkus decided that he couldn't live with himself under such conditions. If he ever wondered whether or not his daughter would still visit him after marriage, he was certain that the answer would be "no"

now. He was certain that the worst would be the outcome. The paranoia had reached it's maximum.

Farkus stood up, removed the grill cover from his body and went to the back porch of the house where he found some old rope that apparently used to keep a dog tied up. He climbed the tree that he found the shovel lying against. He made the rope into a noose, put it around his neck and jumped. His neck snapped and he instantly died without any pain or suffering.

*Little did Farkus know that the police officer never even saw the body while he was in the store. He never went passed the cashier. The body was eventually found later that day, however. The police were called and Farkus' body was found hanging from the tree.*

A few days later, the police officer made his way back to the convenience store to check with the clerk and see how he was doing. The clerk admitted that the past few days had been a bit weird and tough. He asked the police officer if he had any news on the situation. The police officer told the clerk, "We are about 99.9% sure that this man, Farkus Underwood, was the one responsible for the death of yer customer. We have no idear why he decided to commit suicide at yer home, so we can only assume that he felt guilty and hopeless. We did learn a little about him that is quite interesting however, if you'd like to know."

"Sure, I guess," said the clerk.

The officer continued, "Three years ago, his eldest daughter mysterious died the day before she was scheduled to be married. Apparently she had been stabbed... now nobody knows why exactly, and the case was closed as a suicide due to the forensic evidence ... but the authorities are starting to rethink that conclusion; and, as it turns out, there have actually been as many as seven other cases around the country, similar to this one, where people have been found stabbed to death inside or near a convenience store."

"Well my heavens!" yelled the clerk has his palm went to his face.

"Heh, well the killers were never found in any of the seven cases either. We are looking into seeing if there is any link. We are fairly certain that there is, and if there is, we are lucky that this *mad man* is no longer able to do such meanthings. We just may never know the truth or why he did it."

"What a relief", said the store clerk. "I'm jus' glad he can't do no more hurtin'. Takes a real evil person to plan such evil things and do them without feelin' nothin'".

"I agree, Norwood", said the policeman, "I agree."

