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Alone in the Dark

Lin Kaillies Kasian

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The night is so quiet that I hear the wheat bending in the field. I don't want to breathe; I want only to slip into the wall. In this foreboding silence, I strain to listen for another sound, for I know "he" will come in the night.

My brother will do no good, although he is just below in the bottom bunk, for I know he could sleep through an earthquake. I don't want to have to fight or scream but know I will if it comes to that.

Every minute seems like a day, as I curl against the wall. I know "he" is drunk, because I saw him empty four beer bottles into himself before my brother and I came to bed. Why do they all love to drink? I try to avoid them; I want to have my first love, have him walk with me in the square, play chase in the wheat. Just because my body has matured faster doesn't mean I'm ready to be a woman. I'm not, I'm not!

Alone in the Dark

by Lin Kaillies Kasian

The silence is suddenly broken by his stumbling into a wall as he fumbles toward the room. My heart races as "he" nears the bed; I want to swallow but can't. I feel paralyzed. "He" reaches across the bed just as a new defense comes into my head. If only I can keep shifting as "he" tries to touch me, then "he" might think I'll wake up or that my brother may wake at any moment.

I continue to act as though I may wake up at any moment each time his hand tries to touch me. Between each attempt "he" makes, I keep praying "he" will give up and go away. It seems as if weeks have gone by, yet I know it's not morning because his baby hasn't started her morning cry.

After what feels like an eternity, "he" gives up and again fumbles back to his room. I sigh as I hear him fall into his bed. When finally I hear his snoring I feel safe enough to let the tears flow. I cry as I realize what I have lost: "He" would no longer be my favorite uncle, but a feared enemy as other uncles already were.