



## Part 1-

Deja vu is something that happens only once in a while, a moment where we have a slight recollection that appears suddenly. In a city like Lockwood, those visions happen daily.

A small office building sits on the corner of a street with a view of a coffee shop and a parking lot. People in collared shirts and khakis are sitting in cubicle desks typing on their keyboards, answering phone calls, and talking amongst each other. There was construction going on in the parking lot, a few people in the office watched while they were on break. No one was sure what was going on, they seemed to be digging up something but there was water spilling out from the concrete. One guy who worked over the summer, Finn, sipped his coffee and watched the water spill closer to the building. Now, people started to worry and ask questions. Finn rode the elevator downstairs to go check out what was going on. He reached the ground floor. At this moment, water had made its way into the lobby of the building. Sweat dripped down Finn's neck. In a moment of panic, he repeatedly pressed the *close doors* button of the elevator. The doors closed just before the water could seep through. Finn reached the fifth floor where the offices were located, in a panic, he described what had just happened. Everyone was stunned. Knowing that they were trapped up there, they decided to stay calm but monitor the situation. Tensions were rising and so was the water.

The sound of construction continued outside but none of the workers seemed to panic. The feeling of stress and unknown slowly turned into anger. At this point, no one was working. Everyone was huddled together against the windows, sipping their coffee; the only thing keeping them alert. Finn paced around the office trying to think of a solution but nothing came to mind. That moment of clarity breezed past only to dissipate just as quickly as it arrived. A few minutes later, the coffee pot had been emptied. Now, everyone was left with their computers, a few snacks and water left in the cabinets, and the large window displaying the cause of what could become a disaster. Luckily, the power was still on. The water was still working but no one

wanted to think about water right now. A few people scattered around to their computers to research if anyone knew what was going on right now. *No results*. Any hope that anyone had of being rescued was diminished. To keep themselves occupied, people started to sit around and talk with each other. They never did that often, most of their time was dedicated to their work. The long days that they spent in the office took away from their time at home. Talking with others didn't exactly fit into their schedule.

The conversation in the room reduced, construction outside continued to rattle, and everyone was restless to the point of anger. There is an exit located in one corner of the room with a staircase leading down to the ground floor. Jim, a coworker of Finn, decided that he would walk down the ground floor to see if he could get any response out of the construction workers. There were multiple warnings given to him by his coworkers telling him that it was too dangerous. Despite the warnings, he went anyway. The exit door opened and Jim walked into the concrete-walled staircase. He looked over the railing to make sure there was no water flowing at the bottom of the staircase; there was not. He walked down slowly but the feeling of anger made him walk faster. Reaching the bottom floor, he could hear the construction louder than ever. The final exit door was located to the left of the staircase, he pushed the door open and water started to flow into the staircase. Quickly, he shut the door. Jim stomped through the water which was the height of his knees. Across the street he saw the construction workers continue to work despite them standing in over a foot of water.

“Hello? Can you hear me?” Jim yelled.

There was no response. He figured that they couldn't hear him because of the excruciatingly loud noise coming from the drill that was hollowing out the metal water pipe. Jim

struggled to get closer to them. One step at a time, he managed to raise his legs over the water. He got a few feet from the construction workers. They were all wearing large orange jackets with neon yellow stripes on the arms; the pants matched as well.

“Have any of you noticed that there is water flowing down the street? People are in danger!” he said sternly.

No response. Jim used one of his arms to grab a worker's shoulder. The worker turned around, startled, and turned off his power tool.

“I’m sorry, what did you say?” said the worker.

“Do you see the water? What is going on?”

“We are not allowed to stop working until 4:30pm, it is a part of our schedule.”

“What schedule? Surely you can stop working to clean up this mess. This is hazardous, how can you ignore this?”

“We have to get back to work.”

The workers' voices sounded slightly rattled, a bit computerized.. They seemed off, something had to be wrong with them. Jim turned back around in shock and a bit of fear. He had many questions. The workers seemed to be very invested in this schedule that one of them mentioned. He noticed his coworkers watching him from the window of the sixth floor. He walked back to the exit door of the office building, no questions answered. Again, he opened and closed the door quickly, making sure that he didn’t let any water inside. Finally reaching the sixth floor, Jim pushed open the door to the office and immediately saw almost everyone at their desks working like nothing was happening.

Slowly, overtime, everyone has started acting exactly like those construction workers. It's been two years since this incident. Lockwood has turned into a "perfect city." It's established its own schedule. From a distance, nothing seems odd. People wake up in the morning, eat, go to work or school, have free time, and sleep. It is a normal day for most people. One component that stands out is that there are no arguments, conflicts, or anger. Emotions are still present but nothing that gets out of hand. Nothing disrupts the peace of the schedule, the orderly structure that sign-handedly shook the society to a point of perfection. The point of perfection where it doesn't seem real, where improvements are non-existent.

Finn, who was at the original incident that started this entire conflict, is living a life just like everyone else. However, he does not remember the event. He lives with his mom and dad. It is now the middle of the school year. Finn is a good student, he keeps his grades up and always makes sure to stay organized. Having the same schedule doesn't mean having the same organization. His friend Magdalena is pretty different from Finn. One part of their schedule is labeled *free time*. This lasts for around an hour and a half everyday, a little more on weekends. They always hangout whenever they can during this time. They usually go to Finn's house, Magdalena's parents are much more strict than Finn's parents. That's probably why she likes his house more. Finn met Magdalena in pre-school so Finn's parents are very comfortable with her. She considers them her second set of parents.

The sun rose and brightened up Finn's room. The alarm clock went off at *6:30am*, same with Magdalena's and every other kid in Lockwood. Everyone, every morning wakes up at the same time. The day has started. They both hop out of bed, get dressed, and brush their teeth.

After they brush their teeth, they are scheduled to drink a glass of water. They can then eat breakfast, pack their bags, and leave for school by *7:15am*. School starts at *8:15am* and ends at *4:05pm*. The same bus picks up both Finn and Magdalena. A yellow bus circles the cul-de-sac, first Finn hops on. They are assigned to sit in the same seat everyday. Unfortunately, Magdalena sits three rows behind Finn. The bus ride to school takes about 20 minutes which means that they get to school early. The time that they have before the bell for school rings is scheduled as *free time*. Finn and Magdalena meet on a green bench outside of the school doors under a few trees that shade them from the blinding sun; not a cloud in the sky. Students walk in a line in front of them waiting to get into the building.

The bell rings a few minutes later. They both walk in opposite directions to get to their classes because they don't have the same school schedule. However, they will see each other again at the end of the school day just like every other day.

## Part 2-

As the sun set, Finn and Magdalena returned home contently, undisturbed, as they usually would. One foot at a time, they walked at exactly the same pace and made it to their houses at exactly the same time that they did every day. They addressed their parents as they usually would when they returned home.

“Did you have a nice day?” asked Finn’s mother. “Yes,” Finn replied bluntly and turned his attention away from his mother. He went upstairs to complete his homework.

It was at this point, after Magdalena had done the same ritual practice and was halfway through her own math homework that she felt rather odd. All of a sudden her mouth was very dry. Her mouth was very dry all of a sudden. She couldn't remember the last time she had felt that way. She was thirsty. Not just thirsty though, she felt as if she had just woken up from a deep sleep and hadn't drinken water in days. "Never mind that" she thought as she turned back to her work and tried to focus on the task at hand. After all, if she didn't stick to her work, her parents would reprimand her harshly. She eyed up her homework. As she read through it, she felt another odd sensation. This one felt much more pressing though. She paused, confused at her own emotions and tried to think through her thought process. She knew she had to do her homework, but why? It wasn't interesting or fun, it was boring. She was bored. When she thought about it everything she did was boring, it all felt so scripted, so forced. Every day, the same routine, the same schedule, why? The more she thought, the more her life seemed less interesting. She leaned back in her chair. It was too much. She had to talk to Finn, maybe he felt the same way. She reached her phone and dialed the numbers. The phone rang for what seemed like ages. When someone finally answered, it wasn't Finn.

"Who is this! Who is calling at this hour?!?" Magdalena immediately recognized it was the voice of Finn's Dad.

"Um, it's Magdalena. Is Finn around?", "Is something wrong?" replied Finn's Dad. "You know phone time doesn't start for another few hours". "Yes, I know," she said, trying to sound as calm as possible. "I just need to talk to him". "Alright fine" He said, "But make it quick!" Finn took the phone from his father. "Hello?" he said, with a puzzled look on his face. "Who is this?" "Finn? It's Magdalena. We need to talk, not on the phone though. I'll meet you at your house in 15". "But we're supposed to stay home for the rest of the night, you know that," Finn replied in a

hushed tone. "I know, I know. But this is urgent. Leave your bedroom window open, so I can come inside without your parents knowing". "Magdalena, you're not making sense. I don't understand-" Magdalena cut him off, "I'll explain when I get there. I have to go".

Finn was worried about his friend. He had never heard her talk like that before. Something was wrong, but he just couldn't figure out what. He questioned whether he should open his window as she had advised. In the end, his curiosity compelled him to do as she said.

Magdalena climbed through her own window as quietly as possible, so she wouldn't alert her parents. Dinner wasn't for a few hours, so hopefully her parents wouldn't notice her absence for a while. She needed to be careful now, if anyone saw a youth out this late they would surely alert the police. She made for a tree just next to her window. As she climbed down, a smile crept over her face. The thrill of breaking the rules felt so refreshing to her, Finn needed to experience it. She cautiously ran through the completely silent streets making sure not to be spotted by any patrolling officers. She knew how risky her situation was. She would sometimes hear whispers of what happened to people who didn't follow the schedule and always questioned why anyone would want to break it in the first place. Now she understood.

As she ran past all of the completely identical houses, she caught a glimpse of the sunset. She had never really looked at it before, but as she did, she was overcome by its beauty. She paused for a moment to admire it, just long enough for a patrolman to catch a glimpse of her. He silently moved towards her. When she finally noticed him it was too late.

"Hey! Who are you?" he said, still moving closer "I'm uh, I was just going home. I just lost track of time" she replied. "Lost track of time eh?" He looked her up and down trying to decipher whether she was a threat or not. "I really should be going, my parents will be worried," she said, slowly backing away from him. "Worried eh," Magdalena continued backing away

before turning and running. To her surprise he didn't pursue her. The officer thought for a moment before reaching for his radio. "Command, do you copy? We might have a situation here."

After finally reaching Finn's house, she thought for a moment about how she could get up to his roof without anyone noticing. To her surprise she saw a tree placed at exactly the same spot in relation to the house as the one in her backyard that she used to climb down a few minutes earlier. "Another coincidence" she thought, they were starting to add up. Before climbing through the gap in the window that Finn had left she looked through to see if the coast was clear. She saw Finn sitting on his bed with his hands on his head. She called his name quietly to alert him of her presence. As he looked up, startled, she saw that he had tears in his eyes.

"Magdalena! Thank God you're alright. I was so worried about you. All those stories about those people that get caught, I thought I would lose you for sure." "I'm ok." Magdalena replied. "Finn, you know I wouldn't come if it wasn't absolutely necessary." "Ok." Finn replied "I have a question for you, do you ever feel sort of...blank" "Blank?" Finn replied "You risked getting caught to ask me if I feel blank?" "Look I know it sounds crazy, but sometimes I feel like the life I live is not my own, like I'm always on autopilot, and I can never turn it off. But today, for some reason, it's like I snapped out of it, like I'm finally living for the first time. Finn looked puzzled, "Are you feeling ok? Are you sure you shouldn't see a doctor about this" Finn said. "I feel fine, in fact I feel better. Just think Finn, you wake up every day and do virtually the same things, in the same order. Why? There's nothing exciting about that. Don't you feel it? Don't you feel so controlled?" "Maybe? I don't know," Finn replied. Magdalena grabbed his arm and pulled

him towards the window. "Come on," she said. "We're gonna break the rules" "Are you crazy! Do you know what my parents will do if they fin-" Magdalena put her hand to his mouth to shush him. She led the way through the window onto the roof and held his hand as he crept through. She felt it shaking. "Now think," she said, "What do you want to do? Something you've never done before." "I don't know. Let's get off the roof for starters" Again, Magdalena led the way as they silently climbed down the tree. When they reached the ground, Magdalena noticed a change in Finn's behavior. He seemed less tense, like he was starting to finally see the real reality. "Come on," she said, "I want to show you something." They walked side by side towards where Magdalena had previously seen the sunset. When they got closer, Magdalena placed her hands over Finn's eyes "I'll lead you." she said. Finn looked at her and nodded silently. When they reached the optimal viewing point she lifted her hands and let him see the bright looming figure in front of them. They stood there for a moment. "It's beautiful," Finn said, again with tears in his eyes.

The moment was interrupted by a faint and soft banging noise from behind. Finn and Magdalena both turned immediately to see what it was. In the distance they saw two policemen in a small park, one on his knees and the other standing over him. Both of the kids looked at each other and silently agreed to see what the two officers were doing. They slowly moved, concealed by shrubbery separating the sidewalks and the houses towards the men. As they got closer, they saw the man on his knees was holding a crowbar and was directly next to a sewage grate. Once they got as close as they could without the men noticing they stopped and watched. The man with the crowbar held it up to his partner gesturing for him to take it before removing the sewage grate from the ground.

“We have to be quick,” the mainman patrolman on the ground said “there were reports of people outside around here.” He held out his hand waiting for the man standing to give him something. “Now the serum,” he said with an eerie grin on his face. “It’s crazy,” he said. “Just a few drops of this and their minds go all funny, they’ll do whatever you tell them to, it’s like they turn into zombies or something”. The standing man handed the man on his knees a small vial of shiny blue liquid. He giggled as he took it and then started to laugh as he poured it into the dark abyss. Eyes wide, Finn and Magdalena exchanged a shocked look. “We need to go,” Finn whispered. Magdalena thought for a moment then nodded. As they started to shuffle away, Magdalena stepped on a twig which snapped loudly. The two men looked startled.

“Who’s there!” The man on his feet said. He shined his flashlight towards the bush the two were concealed behind and reached for his gun. “Run!” Magdalena said. Finn had no problem following her orders. They jolted up and started to sprint away. Behind them, they heard the sound of slamming car doors and an engine starting up.

“We need to split up,” Finn said as they ran, panting. “I’ll go to my house, and you go to yours” he continued. Magdalena nodded in agreement. At the next intersection they went their separate ways unsure of what would happen. As they ran, they both thought about if that would be the last time they saw each other.

## Part 3

As they entered the comfort of their respectable homes Magdalena and Finn had no idea what to think, let alone expect. With a million thoughts and scenarios going through each of their minds, they started to individually connect the dots. It had dawned on them that the life they had

always known, similar to everyone else's was just a facade. Unsure of what they saw Magdalena and Finn decided that they would try and make sense of everything. There was no way the life they had known was all fake.

Overwhelmed with this newfound information, both of them decided that they would return home and break their routine just slightly in the morning to see if their results were the same. When Finn returned home everyone in his house was sleeping just as he had suspected. Creeping up to his room and shutting his door slowly so that it wouldn't make any noise, he went to bed. However, Magdalena couldn't sleep her mind was racing thousands of miles a minute. When her mind finally calmed down she managed to get two hours of sleep, before she woke up.

“Good Morning honey,” Magdalena's mother said as her daughter crept down the steps.

“Morning,” Magdalena replied, quick to not meet her mother's eye.

“Drink your water and quickly eat your breakfast, you have to leave for school in a bit.”

Listening to her mother, Magdalena grabbed some fruit from her dining room table and a bottle of water. As she ate the fruit, her mother retreated to their living room. Seizing the opportunity Magdalena wasted no time quickly dumping her water out and returning to her seat to pack her school bag.

When Finn and Magdalena got to school they were quick to find each other. Which to anyone else wouldn't seem odd because, after all, they were best friends.

“You didn't drink the water right?” Finn was the first to speak up as they approached each other.

“Obviously not after all we saw yesterday, I'd die of dehydration before drinking that.” As the two friends giggled, they set off for the rest of their day. Something felt off though, they no longer had the desire to sit in their classes and listen aimlessly as their teachers rambled on.

Neither of them could bear it. Sitting in the back of her physics class, Magdalena slowly raised her hand.

“May I use the restroom?” she stated as her teacher called on her.

“Yes, Magdalena go ahead,” replied Mr. Jones, as she fixed his glasses and watched her cautiously step out of the classroom. As she walked down the hall to kill time she was surprised when she turned the corner and saw Finn there.

“Finn” she all but whispered yelled as his head whipped around, so quickly he had almost lost balance,

“Christ Magdalena, had anyone ever told you it’s rude to sneak up on people”,

“I wasn’t sneaking up on you, I simply turned the hallway you should pay more attention,” as she snickered and walked into the bathroom.

Not only was Magdalena bored, but she was also incredibly tired. That could not be further from the truth for Finn. He had more energy than fathomable, and that did not go unnoticed by his teachers and peers. As he hopped back to class, one of his teachers pulled him aside before he got the chance to reach his respectable location.

“What time did you go to bed last night, it seems you have all the energy in the world,” Mr. Martine asked.

“The same time I do every night,” Finn replied with a grin on his face.

“I see, and what did you have for breakfast,”

“I switched it up a bit,” both of them paused as Mr. Martine raised his eyebrow in a questioning manner.

“I had a nice glass of ice-cold water, and some pancakes, my mom was feeling generous”,

“Well then, best to return to class, it’s about that time to switch.”,

“See you next period,” Finn called out.

As school let out, it is almost like Finn and Magdalena's muscle memory had kicked in. Like they would have every day they started slowly but surely down the path to their home like they were in some kind of trance. Instead, tho when everyone slowly started to pass them on their way home they slowed down not feeling the need to pick up the pace and stay with the group of other kids in their age group. Slowly as the herd of kids began to walk away little by little the two of them slipped away from the pack.

It was uncharacteristic for anyone to be out at this time, everyone had a schedule, and everyone sticks to it. So the pair did as much as they could to stay hidden, and not draw attention. They wondered until their backs ached, and they swore they had blisters on their feet. When the sun set they knew they had to rush home because dinner would be served, and it would be extremely odd if they wouldn’t join their respective families.

“ Three Hours,” Magdalena looked puzzled at Finn's words as their walk had been silent, and they were just about to part ways.

“ Three hours till what?”,

“ In three hours to be out here again, I need to know I’m not seeing things,”,

“Okay three hours don’t be late,”

“ Yeah I am always on time,” Finn said as his faced curved into a grin, and he crept up to his house.

Sure enough 3 hours after Finn got home and ate his dinner, he was outside Magdalena's window, shielded by her bushes. As she peeked out the window she threw her backpack down there first then slowly began to climb down. Finn straightened up as he aided her to escape.

“Finn, I want to figure out what is going on as much as you do, but I am never climbing out of my window again,” she whispered shouts as she huffs and slings her bookbags over her shoulder.

“I didn’t tell you to climb out the window,”. As the pair made their way to the park, they avoided all roads even though there was nobody in sight. It was not a long walk, and the two enjoyed the tranquil atmosphere.

“ Should we just cut through here”, Finn asked as they had two ways they could get to the park.

“ Yeah let’s go,” said Magdalena, as they proceeded through a wooded area before they got to the park. But instead unfamiliar areas surrounded the two as they ventured deeper and deeper into the forest. They came up on a small door hidden in the side of their small path.

“ This must be another entrance,” Magdalena whisper shouted.

“Yeah so there are probably people on the other side could you whisper any louder,” Finn stated rolling his eyes. As Magdalena proceeded through the tunnel-like area they heard voices. As they got closer, the pair's breath picked up as the voices on the other side got louder.

“ Hurry up, just dump it in, we are going to be behind schedule we have to start mixing,” a muffled voice spoke as the pair stopped dead in their tracks. They looked at each other wearily as they slowly crept closer and closer to the corner the voices can be heard from. Finn peered around the corner of the tunnel-like place they were in and turned back to Magdalena white as a ghost. Looking at her friend, and sensing his body language Magdalena made the decision to peer over Finn's shoulder. Almost simultaneously the group of people's heads snapped toward the pair. Luckily Finn had anticipated it as Magdalena isn’t notoriously quiet.

“ Let’s just go back home”, Finn said quietly as he peered over the corner again to make sure the other people in the tunnel-like place were still there. They were much to Finn's pleasure. They quickly, but quietly began in the direction of the door. Millions of thoughts go through their heads. Instead of the agreed plan to go home, Magdalena wanted to return to the park, and return to the place they had previously seen the people stirring stuff into the water. Much to Finn's dismay, he followed her. They were best friends, and there was no way he was going to let her go by herself, and she knew it. So they made their way out of the forest and towards the other entrance of the sewer-like area. As they made predictions about what was going on they heard a car on the road, and from afar saw the beams of the headlights in the distance. Without thinking they jumped into the close thing to cover them up as the van cruised by. In utter shock, they mutually agreed that they will not go to the sewer. Hearts beating they rushed home.

“ I don’t understand,”, Magdalena spoke cautiously. Afraid to break the tranquil atmosphere the two had created.

“ Me neither, they should be in bed, everyone should be in bed it's part of the scheduled,”

“ One more time Finn,” Magdalena spoke softly. He looked at her like she had two heads.

“You're my best friend and I love you, but there is no way I am doing this again,” As they rounded the corner and were in the back of Magdalena's house, Finn looked at her and sighed. He knew again, she was his best friend. He’d do anything for her.

“ Fine, this is the last, and I am serious I won’t do it again,” He spoke quietly. He then helped her up.

“ Seriously, I am just going to go through the front door,”, as they both laughed. Finn quickly crouched down as headlight beams could be seen from afar. Magdalena crouched down

in front of her window. As the car strolled through the roads. As it passed, Finn looked up and Magdalena peered through and ushered him to rush off, into his house.

## Part 4-

The next night, Magdalena sat on her bed desperately checking her phone while she waited for Finn's call. Excited to finally prove everyone right by getting the proof they needed, Magdalena packs up her black backpack with all of her necessities. She throws in some snacks, bottles of water, a flashlight, first aid kit, and of course her camera. After she packed her bag she put it in front of the window she cracked open earlier that day. She grabbed three pillows and laid them evenly on her bed in an attempt to make it look like she was sleeping in case her parents decided to come check on her. She threw her quilt over the pillows and tucked it under. She scrunched up an old blanket and put it where her head would be and pulled the quilt over. Once she felt satisfied with that she grabbed her phone off the desk to check it again. Still no call from Finn. Magdalena began to think Finn got cold feet, and she started to get nervous.

Pacing back and forth trying to get a hold of Finn she heard a beep and a faint whisper through the window

“Hello? Magdalena began to yell down to him with a muted but clamorous tone. Again, she hears another faint whisper cut her off;

“I'm outside your house waiting for you and you're sitting here about to get us caught. Come on!”

She gripped her backpack with her right hand and opened the window more with her left. She threw one leg out the window leaving her other leg on the other side, so she could gain her balance. Once she found the pipe to slide down on the side of her house, she put her second leg out the window. Sliding down the pole she felt a wave of fear hit her. It was so strong of a feeling she dropped off the pipe and fell to the hard ground.

“Are you okay?” asked Finn.

”Yea I'm fine.”

Finn giggled and offered his hand out to Magdalena. She sighed and jumped up, declining Finn's help. They strolled down her street wearing all black, so they could be less noticeable in the darkness. It's no secret they were not supposed to be out at this time, but something felt off to them once they reached the park. They felt they were being watched. They *knew* they were being watched.

“Magdalena, are you scared?”

“Scared? Am I scared?” responded Magdalena with a giggle. “No, I'm not scared. I'm excited to get the proof, so people will believe us and stop getting controlled.” Finn looked at Magdalena in understanding.

They moved on and continued to walk towards their destination.

“What about aliens? Or maybe ghosts? Or what if they are doing some secret experiment on kids and we become their next victims.” said Finn.

“That's not funny,” replied Magdalena.

Finn nodded in agreement, and apologized. After about thirty minutes of walking they reached it. The place they were dreading to go. Through the darkness they saw a big black building. It looked like it had been abandoned for over 7 decades with vines taking over the outside of the building, bricks falling out of the walls.

“Woah!” says Finn. “It's even *creepier* in —.”

Magdalena cuts him off.

“Finn, look!”

Finn slowly turned his head to the left where they saw a light go off.

“Guards!” said Finn in a loud tone.

Three out of the eight guards that were there briskly turned their head towards them. Finn and Magdalena swiftly drop to the ground behind the bush they had been standing on hoping the guards could not see them through the gate.

“We have a problem!” says one of the guards from a distance.

Finn and Magdalena looked at each other in despair. Magdalena takes off her backpack and pulls out her camera. She snaps a few photos and puts the camera around her neck. Finn peaks out from the bush to see if there were any guards in sight. There were four guards running towards them from the front, five running from the left, 4 on the right, and many following behind them running from the building. Something they didn't prepare for was weapons. Each guard had two guns, one on their waist and one aimed at them.

“Magdalena, we need to go,” says Finn.

They take off into the woods where they hear gunshot after gunshot following them. Running is all they knew at that moment. After each footstep the gunshots kept getting louder

and increasing in quantity. More and more guards were coming and a colossal amount of fear began to form in Finn and Magdalena's eyes.

They had been running for about 25 minutes before the gun shots stopped. When the gunshots stopped, so did they. Finn wiped his eyes in disbelief and lie he had just woken up from his worst nightmare. Magdalena mentions how they are at the park again. Finn looked down at Magdalena and sighed.

"Your camera is broken," said Finn.

"No!"--- "How am I supposed to fix this? What am I going to tell my parents when they ask how this happened?"

"Calm down Magdalena. Everything will be okay,"said Finn, in hopes of returning her to her normal self. "What about the sim card? That will still have the proof on it right?" Finn states.

"You're right!" says Magdalena. "We can print out flyers at the library and put them all around the town. The Library is closed, but I doubt it's locked."

"Magdalena, are you sure we shouldn't just wait until the morning?"

"Come on Finn."

Magdalena begins to run off and Finn follows behind. He thought it would be better to follow her then get caught by the guards.

They reached the library and walked to the computers. Magdalena took charge and demanded Finn wait at the printers across the room from her so he could grab the flyers. After the flyers were printed they went on every doorstep in the neighborhood. They traveled to a part of the neighborhood neither of them had seen before. The sky was dark and the pair was full of fear. The neighborhood was unrecognizable and filled with masses of abandoned houses. The pair just thought they were in a poor neighborhood but that wasn't the case. As they kept walking

they came across a dark road that they believed would lead them to more houses. They began to feel apprehensive but they continued to walk down the road.

The pair suddenly stopped in their tracks. Guards. A lot of guards. A line of guards appears in the darkness. Majority of the guards stayed where they were with guns pointed at Finn and Magdalena while ten guards began marching towards them. Finn stood there with a blank look on his face. His body was stiff and he was standing straight like a pencil. But Magdalena was the opposite. She had anger written all over her face.

“Leave us alone!” said Magdalena.

One of the guards proceeded to charge up to her.

“Give me the posters,” said the guard.

Finn snatched the posters out of Magdalena's hand and plunged it into the guard. By the time Magdalena could react the rest of the guards had reached them. Now they were surrounded. Finn turned towards Magdalena with a sorry look. All of the sudden the guards grabbed them and threw them to the ground. A van pulled up and they were tossed into it. A guard threw a black bag over both Finn and Magdalena's head.

After driving for what felt like hours, they feel themselves being forced. Even through the bags they could tell they were being brought into a building. Sounds of screaming coming from all ways began to freak them out.

“What the hell is going on!” screamed Finn.

The guards ignored him. Finn felt exhausted after walking all night and decided to give up. He let the guards drag him down what felt like a hallway until the guard just dropped him. He felt relieved for a second. He thought it was over; that all the dragging had stopped; and that he could finally go home.

Finn had been sitting alone in a room for over an hour. His mind was in a thousand places. The screams kept getting louder and suddenly he heard the loudest one yet, Madalenas scream. He jumped up trying to get the bag off of his head but his hands were tied. The thought of guilt kept appearing in his brain.

Thoughts like “What if shes hurt?”and “what if its my fault?” kept appearing in his head. After a loud slam of a door he felt his bag come off his face. There in front of him stood an old man. He was big and tall and look liked he could pick Finn up with just his pinky. Finn panicked and asked where Magdalena was.

“Where is she?” said Finn.

“Relax Finn. Everything is going to be okay,” said the old man.

“How- how do you know my name?”

“I know everything about you,”

“Who are you?”

“Nobody you know”

“Is Magdalena okay?” Finn said with a sorrow look.

The man walked out of the room. Finn was so upset he tried to follow. There he saw Madalenas lifeless body being dragged out.

There ,yet again, the oldman appeared with saying four words that stuck with Finn forever.

*“Curiosity killed the cat.”*

**ATTENTION!**



**FREE YOURSELVES!**



Stop and take a second to realize that the government is controlling us! These pictures are the proof!

**GOVERNMENT SUCKS**  
DONT LET THEM CONTROL YOU

## Annotations-

### DeNaiza's

- 1.) In our story, *Ahead of schedule*, one technique I chose is to use a third-person point of view. I chose this because in our story we have two main characters, and I wanted to go along in the story with both of them and get both of their perspectives. This was the easiest using the third person. Another reason I chose this point of view is so that the reader can get equal perspectives on both main characters without a biased opinion. I also wanted the reader to feel familiar and comfortable throughout the story with both characters because one character isn't the main focus they both are. As the reader goes on with the story they follow both characters and because of that as the characters continue with their journey so does the reader. In my story, the narrator states, They were best friends, and there was no way he was going to let her go by herself, and she knew it. Nathaniel Hawthorne influenced my decision to write in the third person. I took my inspiration from the scarlet letter. Where we follow the main character Hester Prynne, but also get some insight into other characters, and how they are feeling.
- 2.) Another technique I used is my paragraph lengths. I chose to write longer paragraphs with minimal dialogue. When I did have dialogue it was longer conversations. I chose this because I wanted my scenes to be more descriptive due to my lack of dialogue. As shown in my story, "In utter shock, they mutually agreed that they will not go to the sewer. Hearts beating they rushed home." I chose to focus on the surroundings, and how my characters felt versus the interactions they shared with each other.

**3.) For my final technique, I chose to have physical descriptions after my dialogue. I chose this because I wanted when I had dialogue for it to be strong and tell a lot. It helps the readers understand the story so that they could correctly picture the moments in which my characters interact with each other, and I chose to have dialogue. “ One more time Finn,” Magdalena spoke softly. He looked at her like she had two heads., I want moments like those shown in the quote above in my story to show the effects the dialogue has on each character.**

Azi

*Annotation #1 - In 50-100 words, describe a technique you use in this piece. Why did you make that choice, and what impact does it have on the reader's understanding of the story? Make sure to quote a phrase or sentence from your writing. Bonus points for explaining how another author influenced your choice!*

*One technique that I used was using dialogue throughout the story. This technique was useful to me as a way to continue the plot forward by creating new ideas in the dialogue, and giving the reader more of an understanding about how characters are feeling. The first of these benefits is seen when the patrolmen are seen putting a special serum in the water. “Just a few drops of this and their minds go all funny, they'll do whatever you tell them to, it's like they turn into zombies or something”(5). When Finn and Magdalena hear this, they get a new perception of their world that they didn't have before. The second can be seen when Finn talks about how he was worried about Magdalena. “Magdalena! Thank God you're alright. I was so worried about you. All those stories about those people that get caught, I thought I would lose you for sure”(4). Here we see through the dialogue how much Finn really cares about his friend. I was inspired by Ken Liu to incorporate this into my writing. After reading *The Perfect Match* I thought that this technique was used extremely well, and I wanted to have it in my own writing.*

*Annotation #2 - In 50-100 words, describe a technique you use in this piece. Why did you make that choice, and what impact does it have on the reader's understanding of the story? Make sure to quote a phrase or sentence from your writing. Bonus points for explaining how another author influenced your choice!*

*A second technique that I used was using both very short sentences and long sentences. The short sentences were used for scenes that had more action in them, such as when Magdalena is sneaking out of her house. “She made for a tree just next to her window”(2). These small sentences build anticipation and make the reader wonder what will happen next. The long sentences were used for more descriptive scenes such as when the two kids notice the policemen on the road. “In the distance they saw two policemen in a small park, one on his knees and the other standing over him”(5). These longer sentences give the reader a better understanding of the environment and the situation that the characters are in.*

*Annotation #3 - In 50-100 words, describe a technique you use in this piece. Why did you make that choice, and what impact does it have on the reader's understanding of the story? Make sure to quote a phrase or sentence from your writing. Bonus points for explaining how another author influenced your choice!*

*A third technique that I used was having a place for a chapter break. "Command, do you copy? We might have a situation here."*

After finally reaching Finn's house, she thought for a moment about how she could get up to his roof without anyone noticing"(3). The chapter break makes it so the first passage ends on a sinister note of how the patrolman knows that something is wrong. This makes the reader curious about what will happen next and eager to keep reading. The next passage picks up a few moments further in time of the previous one which again emphasizes the chapter break.

#### Conor Annotations

##### *Annotation #1 -*

One technique that I chose to use was the point of view of third person. It allowed for the reader to get a visual description of the settings along with physical descriptions of the characters and what they were feeling. Since I was including the backstory in my writing, it allowed for the third person to introduce something that characters don't remember, otherwise known as privileged knowledge.

##### *Annotation #2 -*

I used the technique of giving the reader privileged knowledge. The backstory, the beginning of my writing, gave background to the main incident which is present in the rest of the story. However, the narrator is telling this reader this while the characters don't remember this happening. The readers can use this information to infer what might happen to the characters later or what the root of the conflict might be. "Finn, who was at the original incident that started this entire conflict, is living a life just like everyone else. However, he does not remember the event" (pg.4). This is an example of where I told the readers that the details that they just learned were privileged.

(Ken Liu)

##### *Annotation #3 -*

I decided to start my writing with a motif. It allowed for the readers to think of the bigger picture when reading the story. The idea around having something else to think about rather than the story itself provides for deeper thinking and understanding. My main focus for the larger meaning of the story was around deja vu and how memories are often remembered at random moments but in this case that isn't true; they happen everyday because that's all that people know. Everything repeats. "Deja vu is something that happens only once in a while, a moment that we have a slight recollection of appears suddenly. In a city like Lockwood, those visions happen daily." I wanted to connect with the reader by sharing something with them that they can relate to so they can visualize it better.

(Octavia Butler)

Savannah

*Annotation #1 - In 50-100 words, describe a technique you use in this piece. Why did you make that choice, and what impact does it have on the reader's understanding of the story? Make sure to quote a phrase or sentence from your writing. Bonus points for explaining how another author influenced your choice!*

*As a group we decided to use 3rd person technique. We chose this because we felt it would be easier for the readers to relate and engage. It also gives them a chance to take a step back and know how the characters are feeling and how they express their emotions. For example I wrote "Calm down Magdalena. Everything will be okay," said Finn, in hopes of returning her to her normal self. It shows what he says, how he says it, what his reasonings for saying it, and why he said it. Choosing third person definitely was a good choice for our story because we can go into how both characters or more feel and their thoughts without it getting confusing for the reader.*

*When reading the book "Clap when you land" and seeing how it got confusing when they were trying to how both girls feelings and flip flopping back and forth helped me decide to make it easier*

*Annotation #2 - In 50-100 words, describe a technique you use in this piece. Why did you make that choice, and what impact does it have on the reader's understanding of the story? Make sure to quote a phrase or sentence from your writing. Bonus points for explaining how another author influenced your choice!*

*One technique I decided to use was to write short paragraphs with many descriptive words. I also chose to use descriptive details when explaining what someone is doing. Paragraph one states "She grabbed three pillows and laid them evenly on her bed in an attempt to make it look like she was sleeping in case her parents decided to come check on her. She threw her quilt over the pillows and tucked it under. She scrunched up an old blanket and put it where her head would be and pulled the quilt over. Once she felt satisfied with that she grabbed her phone off the desk to check it again. Still no call from Finn." Specifically when it writes "threw a quilt over the bed;" "tucked it under;" "scrunched up an old blanket;". All of these phrases make these paragraphs short but still descriptive with detail.*

*Annotation #3 - In 50-100 words, describe a technique you use in this piece. Why did you make that choice, and what impact does it have on the reader's understanding of the story? Make sure to quote a phrase or sentence from your writing. Bonus points for explaining how another author influenced your choice!*

*Another technique I decided to use was finishing off our story with a sentence that gives our overall theme. Our theme is how tennagers are genuinely curious and I ended off the story with the words "curiosity killed the cat." I think this adds such a dramatic look to our story because it relates so much and it is a very well known saying for people. People who read this as the last sentence may take a second when they are done reading and think about why it relates to the story and adds a certain touch to it.*

