

# *Sketch*

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*Volume 69, Number 1*

2004

*Article 3*

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## The Dedication

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## The Dedication

*Adam M. Graaf*

I write a book to deal with it, as therapy. It's better than drinking and my friends convince me I have a talent for writing. I write a children's book complete with illustrations from a well-known local artist. My agent even promises big royalties and perhaps a contract if the book does well. I'm not interested.

The story's simple. A young girl is afraid of the dark. She prays that her teddy bear, Sam, will come to life and watch over her while she sleeps. God answers her prayers and sends an angel to bring her bear to life. At first, the girl pretends not to notice. Then, one night, she catches Sam pulling the sheets over her shoulders. Sam explains what has happened; that he's really her guardian angel and that God loves her and will always protect her. The angel leaves and the girl falls asleep embracing her teddy and whispering a prayer.

The problem, says my agent, is the dedication.

For the man who raped my sister, he reads.

"Yeah," I say.

He blinks, an indication he's trying to understand.

"There's a moral here," I say. "The bastard should read the book."

At first, I tell them I won't change it, that it's too important. Think of my sister, I say. Think of your sister, they say. She has an abortion to deal with it, as therapy. It's better than cutting herself, she tells me, so I urge her to talk to someone, maybe even a support group. She's not interested.

Finally, I change the dedication. My agent's pissed, the publishers back out, and even the illustrator has words for me.

I write a book, it begins.