

# *Sketch*

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## The Dark Surprise

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# The Dark Surprise

Kaylyn Mechem

Campbell's office was hot, stuffy, and lacked taste. The furniture was mismatched and worn from years of constant use, a strange smell emanating from every piece. Mysterious stains spotted the out of style blue carpet and pictures of worthless merit hung from the walls, only one of Campbell and his family. The wallpaper which had been white at some point in time was peeling and yellow in most places. Piles of books were scattered all over a lone desk near the only window in the room, a long shining crack snaking through the panes. Dust and grime clung to the glass of the window in grotesque patterns as if someone had purposely smeared it.

Despite the lack of cool air and fancy décor, Moriarty loved the small office. It was the only place in the entire building he could smoke without fearing some form of reprimand, as long as no one found out. Campbell was born in an era of smokers and the only thing the laws restricting smoking had done was instill a rebellious nature in him. Moriarty took advantage of Campbell's anger and often strolled in with a cigarette in hand.

Today, his hands trembled as he blew black smoke from his mouth. He watched with listless eyes as the swirling streams of harmful chemicals dissipated into the air. The door of the office was ajar, but the dark mood which had slowly been eating away at him throughout the morning left him uncaring. Most of the people in the building were afraid of him and probably wouldn't interfere with his unhealthy habit anyway.

It was the sound Campbell's footsteps that made Moriarty deeply inhale one last breath of smoke before putting the cigarette out on the bottom of his shoe. The gun he held in his loose hand felt cold and heavy.

Campbell walked in with a cup of coffee in one hand and a stack of papers in the other. He jumped when he spotted Moriarty standing in the corner of his office but quickly recovered. Years of experience hadn't gifted him with any sixth sense and, any other day, Moriarty would have mocked the old man.

It must have been Moriarty's bleak expression or ghostly white pallor that caused Campbell to quietly set everything on his desk. He looked Moriarty up and down before opening his mouth.

"What's up?"

Moriarty didn't speak but simply nodded in the direction of Campbell's desk. The old man was hesitant but reluctantly glanced over the

pile of books and grimaced when he discovered the horrific sight Moriarty had hidden away on the floor. Moriarty could tell Campbell was sickened but only sighed in response.

“Couldn’t you have wrapped him up a bit better?” questioned Campbell with disgust. “I mean come on. How am I going to clean this up?” Moriarty shrugged and stuffed his gun into his back pocket. “I’ll pay for the bill.”

With that, the two men began making preparations, the smoke from Moriarty’s cigarette still lingering in the room.

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**Kaylyn Mechem** is a freshman in Sociology. Her favorite class is Russian and her pastime is writing random ideas for stories in a little brown book.