



It Takes Two to Make an Accident

by Stuart Carruthers

Tom ran as fast as he could. Weaving in between the slow moving Saturday afternoon shoppers, his heartbeat fast as his mind desperately tried to come up with a credible story. The Cul-de-Sac had a narrow passageway that led down to the bus shelter. Jenny Broom waited anxiously for her friend's arrival and he was late.

The school summer holidays were never ending. Endless days spent hanging out in the park in glorious sunshine smoking and drinking cheap cider was all that mattered to Tom and his friends. Numerous plans were hatched about leaving this dead-end town and moving to the city, but in reality they knew they were stuck here for good.

The abandoned factories that towered over the deserted canal were a legacy to a once great industry where their parents once worked. Now they were the playgrounds for the next generation. Amongst the rusting machines and endless stairwells, Darren and Tom loved to explore the basement cellars. This was where the older kids hung out.

The corridors were so dark they couldn't see their hands in front of their faces and this was where the excitement was. Up ahead they could barely make out the voice of someone they knew well.

Earlier that day Jason Creek and his new friend had stumbled across a bag outside the library that would change their lives forever. They headed straight for the factory. It didn't take long for an argument to start. Running their hands along the sidewalls to guide them, Darren suddenly stopped when he heard a noise like nothing he had ever heard before. Unsure whether to turn back or not they waited in pitchblack silence before slowly continuing in the direction of the oncoming commotion.

Several candles flickered wildly as Jason frantically tried to hold back his friends frenzied attack. In the corridor outside the two young boys froze with fear. Darren pulled on his friend's shirtsleeve indicating that that should leave, but Tom edged forward towards the door opening. Entering the dimly lit space Tom could barely make out the shape of a man who had his back to him. On the floor lay the blood stained mess of Jason Creek. Before Tom could react he was forced back against the wall, blows raining down on him and then suddenly, it stopped.

Emerging into the bright sunshine they ran in different directions. Grabbing her hand Tom led Jenny up the stairs to the top deck of the Number Forth Two. They were alone, but not for long.