Our Sacred Underground: Fiction

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When I was in high school, I was obsessed with death. Me and this friend, Kindall, were into death and dressing in black. All black jeans, shirts, whatever. This was a long time ago, and lots of kids did that, dressed black from head to toe, and we listened to lots of music about death too.

I met Kindall in gym class. I was new to his school and didn’t know anyone. I wasn’t even supposed to be going there. We lied about our address, that type of thing. My mom was just scared of the influences from my real school, but for the first few weeks I didn’t know anyone until I finally talked to him.

One day some dude flushed his head down the toilet in the locker room. Some big guy just walked up to him in that little bathroom in the locker room, and Kindall wasn’t all that big, and this dude just picked him up like a mannequin or something and flushed his head down the toilet. I saw it. He even had his headphones on still.

I gave him my towel to wash the pee off his face. He had pee all over him, and he had to rinse it off in the sink, and it took five whole minutes. And I was just waiting ’cause they were taking attendance in gym, but I didn’t know what to do. All he could do was shake his Walkman off to see if it worked. And it was working too.

I asked him what he was listening to, and he just put the headphones by my ears and let it play. I still can’t remember what song it was or who it was from. I just remember it feeling heavy, but poppy at the same time. Like a light was shining somewhere in the darkness, far away, you
know. I had thought this kid from the West End was all dark and weird all the time, but here he was listening to something that I could get down with. Kindall and I would hang out since then. And that was it.

Now Kindall introduced me to the music before everything else. We spent a lot of time listening to music in his room and talking about the lyrics. Kindall knew all about the music and we went to independent record stores all the time and waited weeks for some records to be delivered. But we could spend hours listening to new music at these places. They would open up and let you listen to whatever you wanted, if you were a regular customer. But we mostly went for the hard-to-get underground records, the best stuff we heard was on those records. Everyone else was into major studio labels, the kinds of songs they made big music videos out of on TV. But me and Kindall, we just didn’t get our minds blown with that kind of stuff, I guess. We were on a different level. So Kindall was already into death, and I guess he got me into it too.

So, I don’t know how we got it all started. I think it was Kindall’s idea to start going to funerals, but I don’t know why we kept going back. It was something different, something exciting, I guess. And maybe ’cause people were emotional and nice to each other is why I liked it, but we just kept doing it. We’d go to people’s funerals that were in the newspaper and show up and watch the viewing. And no one thought anything, most of the time. We’d just show up in suits and sit down most times and no one bothered us. All over town we went to funerals and we did it for weeks. “Just don’t look at anyone,” Kindall would say. And no one said anything.

Except once.

Some Dad didn’t like us at his little girl’s funeral. I told Kindall that I didn’t want to go to this one. He showed me the little girl’s picture in the paper, I had seen her picture for weeks already
’cause she’d been missing. That same picture every day in the paper and on TV and on telephone poles at the corners. Black hair, and she was always smiling.

Her name was Cassie. And I couldn’t even describe to you what she looked like, but that smile, and those happy eyes are still in my head even now.

The cops eventually found her body in the river. Then Kindall showed me that picture of her. Overnight, that kid on the telephone poles was no more. It was like someone I knew in some crazy way. I didn’t know how to feel. I’d met a celebrity in person once before and it was like seeing an old friend. Unreal, you know. I thought maybe I’d feel the same if I saw her there in a casket. So, I said, “No.”

Anyway, I wasn’t having it regardless. I knew from television that only family and friends were supposed to be there. If we got caught, our parents might find out. But Kindall said he had a plan and that he really wanted to go. “Chill out,” he said. “Everything is cool.”

I knew when I walked into that funeral home that this scene was bad. I just got a feeling, a bad feeling. Like someone somewhere was watching us right when we got in there. I got a knot in my stomach when I saw her mom pass me. And I knew it was Cassie’s mom because I saw her on TV, and she looked right at me. I felt like a fool then. Like I kicked myself, wondering what I was doing in this place. Right away, I turned to Kindall on my right, thinking he might be feeling the same way. But nothing. It was like walking into the park for him. Nothing about him changed.

So, me and Kindall, stood by the closed casket. Supposedly, her body didn’t look right ’cause it had been so long that she was outside by the river, so they closed the casket. But me and Kindall got in line like the rest and now it was our turn to pay respects.
I stood next to an old lady to my right that smelled like this strong, cheap perfume, like dirty Lysol. That smell went right up my face man and I wanted to get sick. Kindall was to my left now with his head down. And we all just stood there paying respects and looking down.

“Just a baby,” the old lady said. And she kept saying, “A baby. Lordy, lordy.”

I couldn’t take it no more. I tapped Kindall on his foot to get his attention, but he didn’t do anything. He just kept looking down, bobbing his head like he was agreeing with the old lady. So, I said, “Forget this.” Then I walked back to the entrance. I wanted out. But Kindall, man, this dude just stood there with the old lady. He went and held her hand too. So, I just backed up some more and looked to the front entrance. The doors were wide open, and no one stood in the main lobby anymore. I could leave if I wanted. But I didn’t.

Then I heard, “Something-something, son-of-a-bitch!” Real loud. And I looked to the front and Kindall was flying down from the aisle up in the air. Some dude had thrown him right there with all those people. He landed right on his face. Kindall got up and ran. He ran so fast, he flew right past me. And I was just standing there looking back at Kindall going out those doors, and I looked back and saw this man’s eyes, starting right into me.

I’ll never forget it. Those eyes. He looked like he had already killed someone in his life. Like he choked out the life of some guy a long time ago. He cut right into me and went down to my gut. I almost shit.

I ran though. I ran, and I think he said something about ripping us apart, but I wasn’t even paying attention ’cause by the time he said it, I was mid-air jumping off the porch of the funeral home. I just kept going. Going and going right around the block and into an alley looking for
Kindall, but he was gone. I didn’t see him anywhere downtown, so I just kept going until I got to a bus stop and got on the one-nineteen.

I got home and Kindall was in my room on my bed with his headphones on, listening to my CD player. My mom had let him in.

And I said, “What the hell? What’d you do?” and he was like, “You okay?” I stood above him and cursed and made like I was going to hit him. I really wanted to hit him.

“I’m sorry, man.” That’s all he said, and he raised his hand in defense and just kept saying sorry. I never saw him like that.

So, I said, “No more, man. I’m not doing it.”

And he was like, “Ok.”

And I was like, “For real?”

“I swear,” he said. “On everything.”

That must have lasted a week. I remember it was a week ’cause it was right around Thanksgiving, and on Black Friday at the mall he showed me the newspaper again. We were in the middle of eating, and he just pulled it out. It was even already folded to the obituary section. He just held it up and pointed at it. This dude, his name was Winky. Winky O’Donnell. No joke. It said it right in the paper, like his government name.

“I want to see what this guy looks like,” Kindall said. “Don’t you want to see what a dude named Winky looks like?”

I got mad. But I couldn’t get that mad cause we were at a restaurant.
I said, “No.”

And he was like, “But this is open to the public.”

I didn’t care. I was tired. I wasn’t having any of that. So, I told him to drop it or else. And he said he was going anyway. So, I got up, threw out my tray and left. I didn’t even bother to get a ride back from his dad.

Now this guy, Winky, when we got to his funeral his mom was there. Her name was Verna. Verna O’Donnell. She came up from behind us and introduced herself. She looked like she must have been in her 90s, but she didn’t look old. Like she still had an active life. She was short with her grey hair in a bun and thin, and she had the brightest green eyes. For a funeral she was dressed nicely too. I mean, she was dressed in black, but it was what you would call elegant. She dressed elegantly. But the one thing I noticed was this flower over her heart. A purple flower. Out of all the funerals me and Kindall went to, I never saw a purple flower over the heart. But she had one, like five other women had one, and I had never seen that before.

“I’m so glad you could be here,” she said. “You both look like fine, young men. So glad you could pay respects.”

So, Verna thought I was some urban kid Winky used to help and volunteer for. We didn’t even say nothing. She just came up to us with a smile and all as we looked at the body. And Winky was big. I’d say he was about in his 60s. Anyway, he looked like a Winky too. A jolly fat guy, with peppered hair.

But his mom, she said, “Winky talked so much about you kids.”

And Kindall said, “I miss him already.”
And he just said it. Just like that. We didn’t have to lie or anything, but he just said it. I kicked his foot, so he could shut up, but then Winky’s mom started to cry.

Then she said, “Well, I know you kids, all you kids, you meant so much to him. He used to say that it was his most important work. You look like you boys turned out okay.”

“He was a gentleman and a scholar,” Kindall said.

Then she said, “I want you to come to the burial if that’s okay. To represent all those kids.”

I did not want to go. I just wanted to go home. I didn’t even want to be at the viewing. I mean, what if one of those kids showed up and exposed us. Plus, I started feeling what I felt at Cassie’s funeral. Like someone was watching, but this time it was different. It was like a bunch of people were watching and talking about us right in that room. But when I looked around all I could see were a bunch of old white people talking to each other and crying. It’s something I never felt before, and I never felt it again except maybe in a dream. I didn’t know about this place, and I sure as hell didn’t know about these people.

But Kindall over there, he said “Yes.” Something was off, and I thought he felt it too, but he said yes.

So, I’m like “No”. I didn’t even say it nicely. I just said, “No. We got to go.”

But now that Kindall opened his mouth, and Verna insisted. So Kindall goes, “We’re cool, Mrs. O’Donnell.”

“Call me Verna,” she said.

“No ma’am, I think we’ll stick with Mrs. O’Donnell, if that’s okay.”

And she was like, “Oh, you boys.”
So, we’re in this car. Me and Kindall are in the back seat and an older man is driving and Verna is in the passenger seat up front. And this older man, he looked normal, like a regular, nice dude, but he had different color eyes. One was blue and the other was brown or red or something. I never saw that before except on TV with those dogs. Huskies, they’re called. The guy looked like a husky, a husky trapped in an older man’s body. He ever had a strong, sharp face like a husky too. But he seemed like a real nice guy, just a normal guy.

I didn’t know what to do. I kept looking out the window, thinking the cemetery was right around the corner. I was hoping it was the one down the street. I told myself that I would go home from there. You know, tell her that I live around the corner. And if Kindall didn’t come then I would leave him behind. I’d leave him right there. I didn’t care.

And Kindall, he just kept looking out the window like nothing was wrong, and Verna just kept talking to us. She asked questions like, “What program were you in with him?” and “How old were you when you met him?” And every question, Kindall had an answer for and with every answer Verna just said, “Oh that’s nice,” and, “Lovely.” She said “Lovely” a lot, always with “Lovely.”

Then she goes, “Oh, he would have been so happy that one of you young men are coming to his burial.”

And Kindall was like, “I wouldn’t miss this for the world.” Just like that. Then right there, I wanted to hit him. I was going to. I mean, what the hell was this dude thinking? This was a dead guy’s mom. You don’t mess with people like that.
Look, man, I agreed to go to this, and I had agreed to go to funerals all the time, but we
ever said nothing to people. We just stood there or sat there and said nothing. It was like an
agreement or something.

Anyway, I wanted to whip his ass. But I couldn’t.

Instead, I told myself, “When this is over me and Kindall are done. For real this time. I
won’t call his house or come by or nothing.” See, Kindall never listened. Whenever he wanted to
do something crazy, he would never listen. First, I was cool with it. Like skipping school and stuff.
But he kept going. The dude put random groceries in a woman’s shopping cart once. I mean, we
were cool, real cool, but I don’t know. I just liked to hang with him. He had other ideas sometimes.

The car stopped at the light on my block. I looked out the window and saw some
neighborhood kids on their bikes. There was Manuel, George, and some other kid that I didn’t
know, all on their bikes. They were standing in front of the corner store, laughing like they were
telling jokes, and they were eating chips and stuff. They didn’t see me though. And I don’t know
if I wanted them to. Like I wanted to get out and buy a soda with them, but I didn’t want them to
see me like this, all jazzed up like this. Like I was just another dork, all suited up to be just like
everyone else. But here we were pretending to know this guy. I don’t know if I was more ashamed
of what I was doing to Verna or what I might be doing to myself.

Then the husky-eyed guy spoke, “You boys, you did really good for yourselves, I see. Your
teacher must be proud.”

“Yeah,” Kindall said. “They are.”

I was tired of him talking and answering. Every time he opened his mouth, he almost got
us in trouble. I was feeling like an idiot not saying anything, like he was just trying to keep it going,
trying to see how far it could go. I figured if there was any way we were getting out of this, it was to just say nothing, but why should I let Kindall do all the talking?

“I don’t even know my teachers,” I said. “I’m new.”

The husky-eyed guy said nothing for a few seconds. He just looked in the rear view. I looked dead at him and just kept a blank stare. But those eyes. I couldn’t tell if I should be scared or what. They just hypnotized me. Especially his left eye. I could tell if it was red or brown. And that face. I almost regretted saying something.


I didn’t know if he was mad or just trying to correct himself. I didn’t care. I wasn’t trying to push it. He looked like the kind of dude that whipped his kids back in the day for being smart, a man of the house kind-of-guy. I wasn’t going to test him.

“Yeah,” I said. “They’re happy. Real happy.”

Manuel, George, and everyone kept on joking and eating. The light turned and we kept driving.

The guy with the husky eyes drove through the city streets, and eventually we got into the woods. And I mean out, out in the woods. It must have taken us 45 minutes to get there. That whole time I was scared and had to pee, but I didn’t say nothing. So, we just kept driving down the woods. I’d never seen the woods like that before. Trees were all around. I’d been to the woods in the park with my bike, but these were real woods, the kind that I only saw in movies. The kind with killers and crazy people that couldn’t take it in the world anymore.
By the time we got where we were going, I couldn’t even see the sun through all the trees and hills, even though most of the leaves were fallen by then.

He turned onto this dirt road and just kept driving, bumps and all. The car jump kept swaying and going up and down. And here my stomach had gotten calm, but all these bumps we’re throwing me around and making me want to pee some more. This whole time I’d look at Kindall and he was just looking out the window like it was nothing. No expression. Nothing.

We got to some type of field. Just an open field big enough to fit all the cars, like 15 of the cars we got there with. And then we stopped. And there was nothing around, but woods. Verna and the old guy got out and then Kindall got out too, so I opened the door. It was getting brisk, and I didn’t bring my coat. Just a blazer. I liked to bring hats too sometimes, but I didn’t have one this time. The wind was hitting my head and my ears.

So, they all got out of their cars, and then they took the casket out of the hearse. Like eight dudes grabbed the casket, the pallbearers. I looked at Kindall and he just kept looking at the casket.

I crept up to him and whispered, “I got to pee.”

Kindall turned to me, real slow “Yeah?”

“How long you think this is?” I said.

And Kindall goes, “An hour. Probably an hour. It’s all good though.”

And he just kept watching. Like it was nothing. Like he was into it now. Like he forgot that we weren’t even supposed to be there.

Then all those men, they carried the casket towards the woods, and I could see just a little opening in the trees. They walked right into it. And all the other men followed.
“Gentlemen,” Verna said to me and Kindall. And then she gestured her head to the path. I looked to my left and all the women, most all old women were bunched together just looking at us, like they were waiting. They were all in white too. They dressed white and all had the purple flower over their heart. They wore different looking outfits, but all white except for the flower. And I mean it wasn’t like they were pissed either. They just politely waited, some looking at us, others looking away or with their heads down.

“Let’s go,” Kindall said, and he walked away towards the wooded area. So I followed him.

We kept going down this trail for what was like a mile, man. It wasn’t even a flat path. We were going all up and down rocks with funeral shoes and funeral clothes on. All thick vines and trees in the way too, for like, a mile. We just kept following the guys that were following the dudes holding the casket. I didn’t know when it would end. But I looked behind and I could see the first woman in line still, a middle-aged woman. She had a mean face too. She was way behind us. Every time we turned a corner, I kept losing her. Then she would show up again with that face, like a mean schoolteacher or something.

So, finally when we turned another corner, I figured this was my shot, my only shot if I ever had one. So, I ran off into the brush. I didn’t even care if Kindall saw, I just had to piss.

But see, as I finished, and I felt better, I started to think. And it was just a thought. I thought I could just run and go home. Like I was just at the park by my house or something. I didn’t know what I was going to do, but anything was better than this. I felt my pocket and noticed that I still had some change for a phone. I could call my mom or my Uncle Rod. There was a store way back on the road and I felt like I knew what way to go. Like I knew that the Sun was west, and we drove up north to get here, and it would be just like in the movies.
I looked up. Kindall stood on the trail looking at me. Like he was waiting for me.

He said to me, “What are you doing?”

I said, “What?!” Then I turned and looked down the trail. I could see the ugly-faced woman looking right at me. I zipped up and walked to the trail.

“Monkeys!”

I swear heard someone say the word “Monkeys” Just like that. I mean, I wasn’t sure, but what else could it have been? And it was coming from behind too. I looked back, and I saw the that same woman looking right at me hard. I had never heard her voice either, but I swear with that energy coming from her, she was the one that said something. But at the same time, I don’t know, it was like it wasn’t possible from where she was standing. It had to have come from someone further back. Someone that fell behind. But she just kept walking right up the trail, giving me that look. And here I was looking for any proof that she was the one that said it. I couldn’t tell.

“You heard that?” I said to Kindall up ahead, but he kept walking.

I looked back down and the ugly-faced woman kept walking toward me. They all kept coming toward me down the trail. And what was I going to do? I couldn’t ask her what she said, if she was the one that said it. So I turned and kept going. I kept going until I caught up to Kindall again. So, we finally got to this field out in the middle of nowhere. It was just a plain field out in the open, real big, but there’s already a white canopy set up with people standing there, five people.

We got closer and I saw those people under the canopy dressed up. They looked dressed like lawyers from England. They call them barristers. All old men. They looked like the kind I’ve seen in TV with robes. They had on black robes, but they had dome-shaped hats, like a derby hat
with no rim. They even had the white ribbons around their necks. They were all old men though.

No women. I looked down the field and the group of women were coming toward us now. Everyone was white though. Both men and women. Not a black man or Latino or nothing in sight. Just white people, from the funeral to the burial.

But at that moment, watching those women make their way to us, it felt like they didn’t care who we were. It could have been any non-white kids. It was like for some reason, they needed us to make this thing real or official. Like they wanted us to bear witness, and that was it.

Now I grew up around lots of people. People that spoke Chinese, Spanish, Arabic, lots of languages. I’d been in their houses and heard it, but I’ve never heard anything like what those guys in robes were saying to each other. I mean, their tongues were twisted, like it wasn’t even possible to be making those words. Then this one guy, he had one of those chins, like multiple chins. He looked right at me and stared. And I froze. Then he looked at Kindall. Then he turned to the husky-eye guy. And the husky-eye guy said something in that crazy language.

Then the chin guy turned to me and nodded like he was approving and saying hello.

So, they placed the casket in the hole and the women started crying. And one by one, the women would throw a flower on the casket and walk away, back to the woods. Not even a word. They just walked back to the wooded area but didn’t go inside. They just stood there with their heads down.

And all these dudes, all of them this time, they put on those funny hats. And me and Kindall were just standing there, and I looked over to Kindall, and he just kept looking at the casket, so I looked down too.
Two bags of something landed on the casket. Burlap bags and they were moving. The bags were actually moving. Two moving bags, small ones, and you know, something living was in them. I could tell.

One bag had a cat ’cause I know how cats move and sound, but the other bag was something else.

I don’t know what. It looked like a big ass worm was in the bag. It moved like a big, thick worm. It was moving and making all these crazy noises. Noises I never heard before except maybe in jungle movies. It was like a monkey, but like no monkey I had ever heard. It just kept moving all around until it fell off the side of the casket. That’s when it really freaked me out ’cause it made this noise, a growling noise, but like a human. Like a grown-ass man making an animal noise.

And then that’s when they did it. The guys in the robes started throwing gas on the casket, a big container of gasoline they had hidden under a blue tarp.

And the guy with the chins, he goes--and I’ll never forget this— ”May you find some way to heaven for what you did to the brothers. Cause we banish you to the infernal underground!”

And then they lit him up. They just threw a piece of paper that was on fire right on top of the casket and that was it. The whole thing went up in flames. And the growling noise stopped as soon as the fire started too. Then the guy with the chins said, “We have spoken. May all within our sacred brotherhood take heed, if you ever wander astray,” And these dudes just stood there watching and backing off slowly. And most everyone walked away, and me and Kindall walked away with them.
We walked towards the woods again, all smoke and flame coming from behind us. But I saw the guys in cloaks stay behind. We walked to the woods, and I could see flames and those guys just standing there, getting smaller every time I looked back.

When we got in the woods, I couldn’t see the burial site anymore. Just smell the smoke. I can still smell that smoke to this day. It was strong. I’ve been to a couple bonfires since then too. I never smelled smoke like that.

And Kindall, right when we get in the car, this dude puts on his headphones and plays his music. We sat in the back again, but this time Verna sat between us, but I’m here trying to figure out what happened and he’s not even in this world. I got pissed. I was trying to get a feel of what was going through his mind, but he didn’t even look at me.

Verna turned to me and smiled. “We’ll be taking you boys back.” I looked in the rear view and the guy with husky eyes just looked at me. Then he looked at Verna. Verna just gestured for him to drive, and he drove.

Then she said to me, “You know, young man, I can’t tell you enough how important this is to us, what you just did for Winky. Do you know that?”

I said, “Sure.”

“You do?” she said. She put her hand on my hand and smiled her big smile. It wasn’t like an old woman’s hand though. It was smooth like a young lady. I felt a sense of relief in some way. Like she really meant to calm me. And those eyes. They cut through me again. Like she knew a lot and she’d seen a lot and people respected her and she knew it.
“And I shouldn’t have to say this,” she said. “But, you know, there’s some things better kept to ourselves. Some people just won’t believe it. Especially coming from someone so young and so troubled at one point.” She went and patted my hand. “It’s just the way of the world,” she said. “I’m afraid it’s just the world.”


They dropped us both off at my house and I got right out of the car. Still, I said thank you for everything I made sure I offered my condolences before they left. I kicked Kindall on his foot to make sure that he did it too, and he did.

We got inside the house, and I didn’t waste no time. I knew my mom was still at work, so I didn’t have to change my clothes before I got there. I went straight to my room, closed the door and turned to Kindall. I wanted to keep it open too, to listen out for my mom, but I needed to send a message to him too—“You’re gonna have to answer or else.”

I looked dead in his eyes and went, “You got something to say about all this?”

Kindall scrunched his eyebrows and said, “What?” like he didn’t know what I was talking about. I had a feeling he’d be like that. I knew on the whole ride back that he would deny everything. I stepped closer to him though. “You could have had us killed, man!”

“Killed?” he said, and he chuckled, “How?”

I squared up to him. I knew that even though Kindall wasn’t tough, he would still fight if he could take his opponent. And I really believed Kindall believed he could take me, like he misread me that whole time, so anything was possible. It didn’t matter at this point. No one would
see or know, if I got beat. Plus, I had the home court advantage. He knew it too. That’s why he backed up and raised his hands a little in defense.

“You just want someone to tag along with your bullshit” I said. “You don’t give a rats ass about me.”

“Man, it’s not even like that,” he said. “We’re boys.”

I pointed my finger in his face. He backed up some more. I knew Kindall was a kind of a bitch, but this was easy.

“I turned my back on my friends from my block,” I said. “All for this nonsense. Man, no one at school does this stuff. All my old friends think I’m crazy.”

He didn’t break eye contact at all. He just kept looking at me like I owned him. It made me feel like even more of an ass that I followed this dude, like he knew what he was doing. But this time, I don’t know, he just looked sad. Like I could say anything and have him follow me instead. This guy was a wet noodle.

“Alright,” he said. “Okay. I got it. I just thought you were different. I thought we were different. That’s all. You want to go back to those dudes, go ahead. Go ahead. That’s all I’m saying. That’s all.”

I don’t know where this came from. It was something about the way he said “those dudes.” And maybe it wasn’t condescending, but I guess I was just caught up in the moment. So it just came out.

“You know,” I said. “You’re nothing but a spoiled brat still mad at his parent’s divorce.”
His mouth parted, and it looked like his face turned all sorts of colors. He didn’t know what to think except maybe I was right. But I could see the pain in his eyes. I really got into his solar plexus or whatever part of our bodies feels hurt, deep hurt. I could feel his pain too. It was sharp, and it went all though him. His eyes kept showing it. Then he just stood there for a few more seconds, not knowing what to do, like he was waiting on me. And I knew I could say nothing for too long, but that whole time, that whole five seconds, I enjoyed it.

Kindall nodded his head. “Yeah,” he said. “Alright.” I just kept giving him the dead stare. I knew that I didn’t have to anymore, but for some reason I did. Then he walked past me, and I could hear the front door close.

By Monday, we were just two people who passed each other in the halls. It got to a point where we would look and each other, but we never said a word all year. Then finally I left that school and went back to my old school and that was it. I saw him two more times, and we said hello and asked each other about our future plans after school, but that was it. The funeral boys or whatever you want to call them were done. Disbanded as we would say. And that was it.

Kindall passed last week out on the west coast at the age of 42. They said he knew in advance that he was going to die. His mom found me online. She asked if I could say a few words at his funeral. I don’t understand why, but she said that he spoke well of me, that I was an important influence in his life. I don’t know how, but all hard feelings had been long gone ages ago.

She said that she would pay for my flight out west, and I could stay at Kindall’s house and meet his boys, Bowser and Ganon. I really didn’t want to. I didn’t feel that I could speak like some of those people when she told me what type of people would be speaking.
She said that Kindall was some sort of music critic out west. A lot of people read him all over the world. And all types of music people and writers would be at his funeral. I got nervous on the phone when she told me. I said, “Yes,” though.

So, I looked him up on his blog. His last post talked about how he was into the death scene as a teen and listened to all that type of music. I mean, it wasn’t a scene. It was just me and him, but whatever.

I looked through all his writing all night. It was good stuff. All types of music and he had a lot to say. So, I went back like one year and I saw this article.

This is what his article said:

“Music is all around. I didn’t realize how important music was until a few years ago. I had stopped listening to records and stopped going to concerts to devote myself to full-time substance abuse. And it wasn’t a lack of music in my life that made me realize how important it was. It was because when I stopped feeling sorry myself and finally started getting help for my problems, I could see the music in everything. First in books. Then in conversations. Then in the world. Then finally in my memories. And the music in memory is always the best songs. You never run out of them. So many combinations and variations, a never-ending long play.”

I asked to speak at the funeral first. I’m going to read this piece, and I don’t want anyone to read it before I do. Then I wouldn’t have much else to say.

But I decided to play our favorite song. It’s a rare song. It sounds like a song about love and happiness, but really, it’s about death. You would only know that if you knew about the songwriter like me, and Kindall did from ordering those magazines and videos.
I think they’ll like that song. They probably never even heard it. But it’s like Kindall said once, “Sometimes you get more fun out of watching people listen to a song for the first time than you get from hearing the song over and over. Like you hear it for the first time again. Then you suddenly realize, ‘Hey, I was wrong. This person is cool.’

Something like that is what I think he said.