

# The Last Sunrise

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*Tora, the blind, 15 year old, goth girl from a small town in Iowa, begins to have prophetic dreams that lead her into a world full of mystery and magic! What is this power growing inside her? And why can she suddenly hear voices calling to her in the dark*

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# 1 - Tora

The darkness swirled around her. Was there no escape? The voices beyond her perspective called her name in a rainbow of tones...

"Tora come to us..."

"Tora we can see you..."

"You can't hide from us Tora..."

She spun around in each direction the voices came from one by one. Was there no end to this madness?

"STOP IT! JUST STOP IT!" she screamed and pressed her hands to her ears as a colossal reverberation of laughter came from every direction. "WHY WON'T YOU JUST LEAVE ME ALONE!" She spun quickly around as her super sonic hearing suddenly picked up a faint cry in the cackling...

"Tora save us..."

"Please Tora..."

"You are our last hope..."

The cackling grew to a crescendo and she pressed her hand so hard against her ears she thought she would crush her head!

Tora Manning sat straight up in bed as her alarm clock wailed her favorite heavy metal radio station at her as her 6:00 wake up call.

"Damn it!" she moaned as she slammed down the snooze button with perfect aim. She ruffled her limp Mohawk, as she sat up, in an attempt to wake up some of the nerves in her head. She felt her way out of her bed and into her bathroom. She didn't bother to turn on the light, what good would it do? She washed her face and brushed her teeth and put on her makeup with routine preciosity. She walked into the kitchen and toward the cupboard, but stubbed her toe on a chair that had been pulled out in the middle of the floor.

"Mother..." she started but caught herself. "Candy! Candy I know you're in here don't pretend your not! What did I say about leaving things out of place?!" Candy moved out from behind the refrigerator.

"Sorry Tora, I keep forgetting. It won't happen again I swear!" Candy pleaded as she moved the chair back to the table. "I just keep forgetting you're blind, this whole place is new to me you know. But I am really sorry!"

"It's okay Candy," Tora said reluctantly, "I forgive you. Just don't let it happen again, please?" Tora maneuvered over to Candy and gave her a big hug. "I know it's hard to remember when something new happens. Just like I had to adjust to being blind, you have to adjust to living in a new foster home every so often. I completely understand!"

"Thanks Tora, I'm glad you do!" Candy replied. Tora released her from her embrace and made her way back to the cupboard. She found her favorite oatmeal and made her way to the stove, where she prepared it. She then proceeded over to the couch where she flipped on the television to the morning news and listened intently.

"Our top story this morning..." started the female news anchor, "the Vampire Murderer strikes again! This time killing 3 prostitutes and leaving their bodies in a dumpster on the corner of Easting and Main." Tora sighed and thought,

*Wouldn't the world be so much better if people stopped killing people?* She shrugged off the thought and turned around at the sound of her mother's footsteps coming down the stairs. She counted eleven

steps before she asked, "Mom? Can I talk to you for a sec?"

"Why sure honey," Tora's mom replied, "but first I need my coffee." Tora listened as her mom poured a cup of coffee and walked over to the couch, where she sat down. "What did you want to talk about sweetie?" her mom inquired.

"Well it's kind of, um, it's just that..." Tora sighed.

"C'mon hon spit it out." Her mom insisted.

"Well you know how, since the accident, I've been special? And I'm not talking about being blind, mind you." Tora said shakily.

"Why yes honey, we know about your, um, abilities," her mom answered timidly.

"It's just that the past few nights, I've had these nightmares. And they seemed so real, they felt like my special dreams, but I was so scared I didn't pursue their meanings." Tora explained. "I'm, I'm just afraid that something bad is going to happen."

"Oh, honey," her mother comforted, as she gave her a big hug, "nothing bad is going to happen. Every one gets nightmares! I'm sure it'll pass." Just then a loud honk came from outside.

"Is that the bus already?" Tora said and pressed the button on her special watch and a voice chimed "7:02 AM" Tora sighed and shuffled over to the door where she picked up her safety pin adorned backpack. "C'mon Candy the bus is here!" she called as she opened the door and walked down the driveway to the bus. She could hear it's motor chug all the way from inside the house. The door creaked open and she could automatically pick out what each individual was saying.

"Did you see the last episode of Charmed?"

"I'll give three bucks for your pastrami sandwich!"

"How many times do I have to tell you Ben? Chew with your mouth closed! Geese!"

She smiled and climbed the steps of the bus and followed the voice of the girl telling Ben to chew with his mouth closed.

"Well excuse me!" Ben said, annoyed.

"Ugh, don't talk with food in your mouth either!" The girl said disgusted.

"Hey Ben, hi Crystal! Room for one more?" Tora inquired.

"As always!" Ben responded and patted the space next to him. Tora sat down. A second later she heard Candy board the bus and the doors squeak closed.

"So we again are off to meet our doom at the hands of high school teachers, no?" Tora said in a fake English accent.

"What?" said Ben jokingly, "I thought this was the bus to Hell?"

"One in the same!" Crystal said playing along. The bus pulled out into the street and began the short drive to Waverly High School, as the friend continued to poke fun at their school.

## 2 - Hell, Alias: School

The bright yellow school bus pulled up to the large, brown building marked Waverly High. The three friends waited for every one to get off the bus before they departed from their seats. "Like I was saying," began Crystal, "being a twin isn't all it's cracked up to be. You're permanently bonded to your sibling! Do you realize that I know what's going on in Ben's head? It ain't pretty!"

"Your minds no walk in the park either!" Ben argued, "All the time it's, 'Oooo, what a hot boy!' You think I want those kind' a thoughts in my head? NO!"

"Would you guys cut it out?" Tora pleaded as they stepped off the bus, "You've been arguing all morning!"

"Well miss, I'm an only child..." began Crystal, but Tora cut her off.

"No, I have Candy now, remember?"

"Oh, yea, that little pink haired foster kid right?" Ben said as he pointed to Candy crossing the courtyard. Tora snapped out her arm instinctively, grabbed Ben's hand, and lowered it. "What the..." Ben started.

"It's not nice to point, Ben." Crystal taunted.

"I'd appreciate it if you guys didn't make fun of her." Tora confided, "She's like my little sister now, and I've never had a little sister."

"Sorry" Ben grumbled.

"Now," said Tora, as she snapped out her walking stick, "Off to first period!"

"But the bell hasn't even run-" Crystal began but was cut off by the sound of the school bell ringing. Crystal sighed "Never mind..." The three friends proceeded into the school with a somewhat nonchalant attitude. After all they were the school's Goths; they had a certain persona they were expected to uphold, blind or otherwise.

"Now, now settle down class." Mrs. Fandri, the Freshman English teacher, said over the roar of rambunctious youths that spilled across her classroom. "Take your seats. Alright, now would every body please turn to page 82 of our current novel, *Lord of the Flies*?" The class simultaneously pulled the small thick book from their handbags and backpacks, including Tora. "Now who would like to read first?" Dani Richards, the teen snob queen, who sat right behind Tora, preceded to jab her in the back with her pen, making her stand up.

"Ouch!" Tora said under her breath, being a Goth she had no emotions, so she just bit her lip.

"Tora?" Said Mrs. Fandri reluctantly, "Well, alright please read page 82." Tora ran her sensitive fingers over the first line of her brail version of *Lord of the Flies* on page 82.

"I've got the conch." Jack sat down, grumbling..." Tora began, and continued without flaw.

"I saw what happened in English today Tora," Crystal complimented, "you sure showed up old Dani."

"Yea," Ben said, "you really -trash can mover to your right- showed her."

"Thanks guys," Tora said side stepping the mobile trash can as they passed it, "but it wasn't all that." Just then a dainty high fashion heeled foot stuck out from behind the corner.

"Tora, look out-" Crystal said, just a bit too late. Tora couldn't stop herself in time. She fell flat on her face. A gaggle of manically laughing girls stepped in front of the fallen Tora. Ben and Crystal bent to help her up. Tora put one hand over her nose to still the bleeding that she knew would follow in a few seconds.

"Well, well, well, how the mighty have fallen." Dani Richards, spat in her too high-pitched voice. Ben and Crystal glared at the girls.

"Oh, that's *real* nice!" Crystal said sarcastically.

"Trip the blind girl!" Ben finished his sister's sentence.

"Oh, I didn't trip her because she's blind," Dani came back, "I tripped her because she's a freak like the both of you!" Dani's posse of mindless teen queens giggled at Dani's not funny joke. Tora's nose began to bleed behind her hand. She grinned menacingly, because she knew that today was Wednesday, the day all of the Dannets, Dani's mindless posse, wore all white.

"Well, if you don't mind," Tora said awkwardly, "We'll be leaving now." Tora removed her hand from her nose to reveal the bloody mess and whipped her hand across the row of perfectly white blouses. The Dannets squealed in disgust and ran off. While Ben, Crystal, and Tora laughed. "You guys mind helping me to the Nurse's office?" Tora asked.

"Not-at-all!" Ben said between laughing spasms. Crystal and Ben helped the injured Tora hobble to the Nurse's office. Where they were forced to leave her.

"This is some mess you've made, girlie." Nurse Hatchet said as she carefully place a second butterfly bandage over the fracture in Tora's nose.

"Not -ouch- my fault." Tora said. Just then the office aide poked her head in the door and said,

"Um, Nurse Hatchet, when you're done with that one, the Principal wants to see her."

"Alright sweetie," Nurse Hatchet said, "she's done."

"Thank you, Nurse Hatchet." Tora said as she popped out her walking stick and left with the aide.

"Tora, what are we going to do with you?" Principal O'Brien asked.

"Well, if you would have listened to *my* story at all, you would have realized that I'm clearly not the problem." Tora said.

"Now, I won't take any of you back-sass young lady!" Principal O'Brien spat. "You whipped your blood over 6 very expensive white blouses, and ruined them!"

"How was I suppose to know that they were white?" Tora said, playing the 'Blind Card'.

"Well, I, you..." Principal O'Brien stuttered.

"Now, I believe I'm missing my lunch, so if you don't mind I'll see myself out." Tora said standing.

"Now wait just a darn minute!" Principal O'Brien shouted. "You have to be punished!"

"First off it's cause and effect. So if you plan on punishing the effect, you best punish the cause first. And secondly, I'm blind! Whose to say I didn't 'stumble' and 'accidentally' brush my hand across their shirts, and like I *clearly* stated before: how was I supposed to know that they were white, or expensive for that matter?" Principal O'Brien sat wordless against her logic. "Good day sir." She said calmly and briskly and walked out.

### 3 - Nightmares

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"You can't run Tora!"
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"Stop trying Tora!"
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"You can't hide forever!"
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Tora huddled under the table that had suddenly appeared. She didn't ask questions, she just hid there. She was so very afraid.

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"Please stop..." she whispered. She had meant to shout it, but it only came out as a whisper. Tora began to weep under the table. A hand touched her shoulder and Tora jumped almost hitting her head on the underside of the table.

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"Tora help us!" the creature said in a soothing voice. Tora turned around to see the face of a little girl.

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"Help? Help how? How can I help?" Tora stuttered. The girl opened her mouth to answer, but as she did a withered hand clasped itself around the girl's mouth and dragged her into the darkness. Tora turned around to face the wall again. "This can't be happening!" she said to herself, "It just can't! I must be dreaming! I have to get out of here!" with that she burst out from under the table and fell right off a ledge that had just appeared. She fell, and fell, and fell. Finally she fell right back into her bed.

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White; ">

Tora sat bolt upright in her bed. She was panting hard and drenched in a cold sweat. She felt her way to the bathroom and splashed cold water in her face. Then she stood there for a moment, bracing herself on the sink, and took several deep breaths.

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“What the Hell was that?” she finally said to herself. “Why am I having these nightmares?” she let out a heavy sigh, and walked slowly back to her bed. She had just lifted the sheets to crawl back in bed when she felt a presence lurking in the corner of her room. “Who's there?” she asked. “Candy? Mom?” there was no reply. She walked toward the corner. “Hello?” she said tentatively. Suddenly she felt a blast of air rush past her and heard the beat of leathery wings zip past her face. She followed the sound until she knew it had flown out her open window. She walked over and closed the window. She then crawled back into bed.

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“Tora...” a voice called from the darkness.

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‘Not again!’ Tora thought, ‘Don't they ever stop?’ She sat up, and realized she couldn't see anything. That means she was still in reality.

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“Tora...” the voice called again. Tora threw the covers over her head and huddled on her bed. She knew

that this wouldn't help defend her but what else was she supposed to do? She felt no presence in her room! What was this thing?! A soft cackling filled her room and Tora drew the covers even tighter over her.

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“PLEASE JUST LEAVE ME ALONE!” She shouted. In the distance she heard the wailing of guitars...

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Tora sat up in her bed for the second time that night, or so she thought. She wasn't sure or not if the first time had been a dream. She hit the snooze button on her alarm clock and rolled over in bed. She had gotten suspended for the rest of the week so there was no point in getting up early. Tora said halfheartedly,

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“What's happening to me?”

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## 4 - Some punishment...

It wasn't a good thing that Tora's father had died, but it's not like it was bad. Tora's dad, or her sperm doner as she liked to call him because he was never much of a dad, had passed away last year, after having abandoned her and her mother when she was only 4. After his death, however, it was found that her father had a LOT of money, and being only thirty, he hadn't expected his demise so soon. So he left no will. Also because he was lazy he had never signed the divorce papers her mother had mailed him 8 years ago. Therefore, Tora and her mom had inherited the loot. Since her father had lived in Cuba, it was Tora's theory that he was a major drug cartel, and that's how he got the money, and that he must have pissed off someone, because they killed him. Or rather, hired someone to kill him. Tora's father was one of the very first "Vampire Murderer" cases. So his while his death wasn't "cause for celebration" that didn't mean Tora couldn't be slightly glad, on the inside at least...

When Tora finally dragged herself out of bed around noon, she threw on her baggy *No Fear* hoddie over her *Corpse bride* pajama tank, and pulled up the bottom of her ripped flame printed pajama pants so she could slip her foot into her bat shaped slippers. She then promptly proceeded down stairs. She made her way to the refridgeorator and reach her hand out to the bottle of milk. Upon reaching said milk bottle Tora found a firmly attached sticky note on the bottle. Tora sat at the table frustrated that her mom had done something without having her coffee. If Tor's mom didn't get her coffe in the morning she was well, to put it nicely, a complete nimrod! She hadn't remembered that Tora was blind! What if the note was important? Just then Tora thought of something, she remembered when her family rented this movie, what was it called, *Daredevil!* Any-who there was this blind guy who could read normal words just by feeling the diffreances in texture. She had neverthought to try it untill now. She placed her hands gracefully above the note and concentrated hard. She placed her fingers along the first word and gently, carefully felt for the texture change. T-O-R-A-,:Tora, her name and obviously the begining of a note to her. She proceeded delicately and found the letter said the following:

Tora,

I had some things to take care of.

Do NOT leave the house, you are GROUNDED!

Candy has a recital after school so we won't be home untill 10:00 or so.

Love, Mom

No big, she had planed on that. She didn't need to leave the house to have fun. She could bring the fun to her. She picked up the phone and dialed Chrystal's number. Chrystal picked up the phone. The first thing she heard was'

"Miss Hardwin, do you mind not doing that durring my calss?"

"Oh, chill!"

Tora recognized the voice as Coach Biggers, the geography teacher, and Chrystal. "Tora, what's up?"

"How do you feel about taking Ben and going AWAL? Come spend some quality time with your best friend?" Tora spoke a hint of deviousness in the voice.

"Sure I'll be there as soon as--" Chrystal began but was cut off by Ben shouting,

"Is that Tora? HI TORA!"

"Shut up you little monkey!" Chrystal returned

"Miss Hardwin!" Coach Biggers began, Tora could tell he was losing his patients, "If you're done disrupting my class, would you mind putting up your cell phone?"

"Like I was saying," Chrystal said a hint of defiance in her voice, "I'll be there as soon as this obnoxious class lets out."

"That is Miss Hardwin!" Coach Biggers, had snapped, "Give me the cell phone, NOW. you're not going to be getting it back for a *long* while!"

"Oh, back off!" Tora heard Chrystal say, "Bye Tora. I got stuff to take care of" and the line went dead.

When Ben and Chrystal arrived, Tora told them neither her mom or foster sibling would be home until 10:00. Ben, Chrystal, and Tora immediately started making party plans. Practically the entire guest list were kids from the "alternative" school. The trio preferred to call it the art school. The Kathrine Anne Porter School (or KAPS for short) was the other high school in town. There were no sports and the majority of the classes were art based. All the other Goths in town went to that school. Why do the terrific trio not attend? Their parents don't want them falling in with a "Bad crowd", like letting them be tutored at the mainstream school was much better or something? Chrystal whipped out her cell phone and dialed at least 30 numbers. At least 20 said they would be there. So they started to get ready.

Tora and Chrystal stated to set up (IE: move valuable or breakable things into Tora's room, and returning with Tora's massive Metal, Goth, Emo, and Alternative CD collection), while Ben started making food. You wouldn't think Ben would be good at something like that, right? Wrong. Ben was an excellent cook, and startlingly quick about it. By the time Tora and Chrystal were done, he had whipped up a large bowl of home-made salsa (with chips of course) and had black dyed cookies baking.

"Chrystal, do you mind getting the spiderweb table cloth out from under the sink?" Ben asked.

"No prob." Chrystal said and went to go get it. As they were putting the finishing touches on their window drapes. The doorbell rang.

It was PARTYTIME!