

## Suspense

*I felt my adrenaline surge as I headed to that place of distorted reality deep within myself. Head cocked and smirking, my response to his question was, "I'm going to take my shotgun and blow my head off."*

*Once again the officers encircled me. They were poised and ready for trouble, the likes of which they were about to get. Officer Trundle forcefully requested I produce the weapon and turn myself over to their custody. I nodded and motioned the officers to follow me to my vehicle. Fortunately, the night before, I had mentally prepared myself for just about any probable scenario. I had strategically parked my car for an easy getaway. Although my vehicle was currently surrounded by squad cars on three sides, the police had not driven up onto the grass to cover the fourth angle, and I took advantage of this opportunity to escape.*

*Sergeant Trundle, believing I unlocked and got into my car to retrieve my gun, just stood there with the rest of the officers huddled around my door, watching intently and telling me to move very slowly. In a flash I slammed my door shut, locked it, fired up the engine, and drove up over the curb onto the grass, barely squeezing through two weeping willow trees. I had ripped up the landscaping and bounced down another curb onto the pavement before the dumbfounded officers were in their police cars, following in hot pursuit. The high-speed chase was exhilarating. I felt an instant adrenaline rush. My heart was pounding, my body invincible. A wild game of cat and mouse ensued....*

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*While on vacation, during one of our family fishing excursions near the campground, Kerry kept herself entertained by visiting back and forth between Donna and myself. Fiercely competitive, my wife and I stood with lines cast in areas of the lake some twenty feet apart from each other, vying for the title of best fisherperson. Donna usually won, dang her hide, and would gloat for days to come. I had just gotten a bite and was excitedly reeling the fish to shore when Kerry began tugging on my leg. I kindly encouraged her to go see Mommy, and off she toddled.*

*Dusk was fast upon us, the best time to fish. I never gave Kerry a second thought. She made her way back and forth between Donna and me all afternoon. When hunger pangs surpassed our desire to fish, we started packing up our gear to head back to camp. Donna asked me where Kerry was.*

***I panicked. Darting around the immediate vicinity, I searched for Kerry as I explained that I thought she was with Donna. The moon was partially hidden behind clouds, making it difficult to see. Donna took our only flashlight and began scanning the walkway surrounding the lake, shouting Kerry's name. Vince stayed with me, and we headed off in the opposite direction. Our desperate cries quickly caught the attention of other fishermen, who dropped everything to assist us in our frantic search for our two-and-a-half-year-old daughter.***

***Donna's worst nightmare was that Kerry had slipped and fallen into the lake and we would come across her drowned body floating atop the water. My fear was that Kerry was kidnapped while on route from me to Donna. What else could have happened? One woman drove back to the campground to recruit more help, and within minutes we had quite a large search party. Myriad voices cried in the eerie night air, and Kerry's name echoed in haunting dissonance. Flashlights dotted the lake shore and shone up into the forest...***