

*Maxim: "Once you tell a lie, you need a whole bodyguard of lies to protect it." – Winston Churchill*

"David, get back here!" the lady from the group home shouted as I flew down the stairs to the front door. I could still faintly hear her shouting from the top of the stairs, but I was too unfocused to make out the words she was screaming. But I knew that she surely didn't want me going anywhere. I slipped on my beat-up, old sneakers along with my plaid coat which had many patches in it, and ran out the door, slamming it with rage behind me. Without looking back, I ran down the street. I began passing every house along it, and was looking at the mounds of snow beginning to defrost from the storm we had gotten the previous morning. I had finally reached the main road that traveled through my small town of Ailey, Georgia. My vision was blurred and hazy. I couldn't seem to focus on how many cars there were, or if there were any cars at all. I stepped into the street and heard the roar of car breaks and the screech of the rubber tires sliding to a stop on the asphalt. I saw nothing but a blur of colors and bright lights. I ran deeper into the street and plummeted to the ground when I reached the opposite end.

Once my sight began to clear, I got up and started down the alley to find basketball courts. I needed to find Jonathan and Adrian to tell them what had happened. The smell of cigarettes became stronger, and I heard them smashing their empty bottles against the ground. Turning the corner I saw them and a few other familiar faces playing basketball. "Jon!" I screamed out from behind the fence. He dropped the basketball and came over to me, panting. "We're in serious trouble," I told him trying to catch my breath. He looked at me with a confused expression. I opened the gate to the courts so I could talk to him more privately. We motioned Jonathan to come over with us, so he did. "What happened?" Jonathan asked hesitantly. I was scared to tell them, but I knew that I had to. I couldn't lie

to anyone, anymore. "My...my foster mom figured it out...what we've been doing...what we've been stealing. She knows everything."

I had never seen their faces more terrified in my life. "Last Thursday, when I told my mom we were staying after school for a project and we really went to 7-11, the store manager called her saying if we get caught stealing again, he's calling the police...That was before you guys went back on Wednesday to steal all those beers. So, the guy from 7-11 called the police and they're out looking for us right now." Jonathan's jaw dropped. "We got caught?!" Adrian sighed. He already had one strike against him with the police for street fighting awhile back. "With the police, once you get caught you can't lie your way out of it. You just have to tell the truth, and deal with the consequences," Adrian told us.

"What are they going to do when they find us?" Jonathan said almost in tears. In the distance, I heard the sound of siren. I couldn't tell which way it was coming from because of all the background noise. Adrian, Jon, and I all looked at each other in unison and began to run up to the alley to escape the police. The sound of the siren became more distant, and we thought we had escaped then. However at the end of the alley, there was a police car sitting there. We didn't notice it because its sirens and lights off. We knew that there was no escaping it this time. The broad man got out of the car and walked over to us. He put his hand on Adrian's shoulder and looked down in disappointment. "I thought you'd learn by now, son. I thought you'd understand that you can't lie your way out of everything." Adrian didn't look at him but kept staring at his feet fiddling around with the dirt under them. "Please don't make this any harder on yourselves and just get in the car."

We all scooted into the back of the small police car in handcuffs, and he shut the door behind us. He stepped outside and made a phone call, probably to the police station. "Adrian, are you going to be okay?" Jonathan asked sniffing. Adrian didn't answer. He just stared at the seat in front of him as a single tear ran down his cheek. The officer returned into the car and drove off from the dark alley. We were passing all the trees and the snow mounds on the main road to the police station. The whole ride

was completely silent. No one had spoken, until we had pulled into the police station. “You know, I was a kid once too. And there wasn’t a thing you guys have done that I haven’t. But when you tell a lie, you have to own up to it. And once you tell a lie, you need a whole bodyguard of lies to protect it. So you’re never really lying to someone only once.” Hearing that, I knew that I had to stand up to my mistakes. The officer got out of the car, and opened our door to let us out. We walked up to the door and the first person I saw was my mom, in tears. I took a deep breath and walked forward. I knew what I had to do.