

**N.B. Since this story is based in America and the protagonist is American and it is told in first person point-of-view, I felt the need to use US spelling.**

**VICTIMS (PART 2)**

**By Rachel Loveday**

“Ladies and gentlemen of the jury, is there any chance with more time, you will be able to reach a verdict?”

“No your honour, we’re deadlocked.”

“Ladies and gentlemen of the jury you are excused.”

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*Deadlocked*, that’s the way I’m living my life now. The judge declared a mistrial and according to Miss Alexander, I can’t be charged again, it’s something called “double jeopardy”, she also said that the prosecution doesn’t have enough evidence to prove that “my actions were intentional.”

That was six months ago. Nothing has changed. I thought that once the trial was over, it would all go away. My mom and I have had to move twice because we keep getting threats from Heather’s friends, some of them were death threats, most of them were just violent. We moved from New York to Newark a few weeks after the trial ended, but apparently Heather had blonde, over made-up cheerleading friends there too. I was never, actually “beaten up” but I was shoved into lockers and called a murderer, I only lasted a month there.

We then moved to Chicago, we thought the further we moved, the better it would be. Heather didn’t have any friends there, but the news had spread somehow, and I wasn’t welcome there either.

And now I’m unpacking boxes in my new bedroom in Los Angeles. My mother told me that this is the last time we’re moving. She can’t afford it anymore. I hate that I’ve made her suffer; I have to start school on Monday. *Dreading, dreading, dreading...* I don’t want to go to school anymore, I’m 16, I don’t legally have to go there anymore, but mom says she doesn’t want me to end up like her. I thought this shit would end after the trial ended.

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Monday, the beginning of the week and hopefully the beginning of a new life with friends and without threats from Heather's posse. This school doesn't have as many people as the others, but it's not too small. Everyone keeps staring at me, I'm hoping it's because they've picked up on the fact that I'm the new kid, it's funny how everyone can pick up when a new kid has arrived.

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Only one person talked to me that day, her name was Jennifer. She just walked right up to me and introduced herself and volunteered to be my lab partner.

"So where are you from?" she asked

"New York."

"Really? Me too!"

"Why did you move here?"

"My dad got a job here, how about you?"

"Same thing, only with it was my mom, not my dad."

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It wasn't until the end of the day that I found out who she really was. My new house was only a block away, so I walked, Jennifer walked up to me and asked me if I wanted to come over to her house, *why not*.

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I knew something wasn't right, when she told me that there was a shortcut through the alley way.

"Jennifer, are you sure you're going the right wa..."

I knew what was coming when three other girls appeared behind her.

"Who are you?"

"Heather's cousin."