



FAMILY

Part Three: Told by Big Al

YOUR AUGUST 2016 FREE SHORT STORY

The C I N Series FREE Shorts "Family" told by Big Al, known as one of the most lovable Warehouse Kids to survive the 1980's burning buildings...

Christina Leigh Pritchard

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The C I N Series *FREE* Shorts

"Family"
Part Three told by Big Al



Photo by Unhindered by Talent

Short by
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This short story follows characters from the C I N Series. It is recommended that you read C I N book one and short story Donna Denning. Information on these stories can be found here:

<http://www.christinaleighpritchard.com/>

The Conclusion

“The way revenge works...”

(continued)

Part 3 of BIG AL, a FREE! short by

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The Conclusion

“The way revenge works...”

I walked home alone. Kurt and Donna said today was the perfect day for us to exact our revenge on Frank. Troubling thoughts ran through my mind, like was I taking my anger out on the wrong person? It was my step-father, Max, that should be locked up in one of the warehouses and then burned alive. What’d happened to me? My thoughts were dark and I hated it.

“Albert!” Donna shouted. She ran towards me, her glasses sliding down her nose. “Why don’t you come with me? I could use your help.”

She was so pretty. Too bad she didn’t realize it. Her hair was long and thick and she had eyes that sparkled even behind those hideous frames.

“What can I do?” I shrugged. “Kurt gave me my list of ‘to do’s’ already.”

Her eyes dropped. “Okay, see you later then.”

I watched her run back towards her car. Did she want to back out too? Sure, I hated Frank, but what about the others? Suppose Millie came with Pete after all? I’d never be able to live with myself should something happen to her.

“Albert!”

Now what? I glanced behind me. Max rode slowly in his car beside me. “What do you want, you child murderer?”

“I didn’t kill your sister! I was at the store, for crying out loud!” His tires screeched, burning rubber. “Forget you, then.”

“I hate you!” I screamed, slamming my bag down. It rolled into the street, landing inside a puddle. “Really? Does this have to happen today?” I let out a groan, kicking my bag down the middle of the one-way road. Cars honked up ahead. I hoped they hit me. “You want to play chicken? I’ll show you up.”

My legs planted themselves smack dab in the center of the lane. Someone held their horn, blasting it several yards away. I raised my arms high and lifted my head, glancing upward. “If Cecelia can’t live, then what good am I?”

“Al!” Tires skidded, inches from me. It was Kurt. “Get in the car, you moron.”

I wiped my eyes, bent over, and grabbed my bag.

“Hurry up, we’re wasting time,” Kurt ordered. “We need to go already, you slug.”

Location: Outside the Warehouse

Kurt and I watched Pete and Marie follow Frank into the warehouse. This was their hang out. How many times had I wished I could join them in doing whatever it was they did inside? I hated feeling like an outcast.

“Look at those sheep,” Kurt said. “They’re heading in for the slaughter. “Baahh!”

I cringed.

“Don’t go soft on my now, Al.”

“Murder’s a serious offense.” I took a deep breath. “Are you sure this is the right thing?”

Kurt shot me a glance. “Do you remember what Frank did to my brother?”

I nodded. *What a tragedy that was...*

“He needs to get his.” Kurt’s fists tightened. “Someone needs to teach him a lesson.”

“The others—they’re just stupid, ya know?” I tried to reason with him.

“They’re his sheep. They do whatever he says, even at the expense of people they used to hang out with; people who used to be their friends.”

Kurt was referring to us...

“What’s going on?” Anthony smiled, revealing his braces. “Are they all here?” He knelt beside me.

“Almost, we’re just waiting on Reggie to make an appearance,” Kurt said. “Where’s Donna? She’s late.”

“Maybe she changed her mind,” I said.

Anthony shoved me. “No way!”

“She’s in, this is all her idea, she’ll come.” Kurt’s eyes danced at the sight of Reggie. “Look who’s finally decided to show up.”

“Do we really need to do this?” I stammered, staring at the bulky chains I’d found.

“Donna’s here with the gasoline!” Anthony jumped, excited. “It’s time, guys. We’re finally going to be free!”

The Aftermath

Most of what we did, chaining the doors, locking up the windows and dousing the warehouse with gas—was done in a blur of emotions. Kurt and Anthony—completed their tasks with giddiness. Donna and I however, just went through the motions, stealing worried glances. Sure, Frank and the others weren't nice to us, but murder—wasn't something I wanted on my rap sheet.

The only part I remembered clearly was the sound of the matches being scratched, and then the sound of fire igniting. The fumes filled my lungs and burned my chest. Fire spread quickly, sending my body into shock. Tiny jolts of electricity spread through me. I turned towards Donna. She pulled on her hair, her knees caving inwards as if she were ready to collapse.

Frank and the others finally realized they were trapped. Screams came from inside. Some pounded on the doors, others tried to crawl out the windows. I couldn't move. Fear overcame my very soul; a realization sank down deep: I was a murderer, just like my *mother*.

I blinked.

My mother killed Cecelia? *No*.

Donna ran towards the front door. “We have to get them out!” She screamed, her eyes pleaded with mine. My heart pounded too hard to respond. “We can't kill them, please, someone help me.”

I nodded, somehow managing to step closer. My hands felt like rubber.

My mother was the killer; I could feel it in my bones. But how? How did I know this?

As Frank and the others screamed, pounding desperately on the door, begging to be saved; I relived the day Cecelia died.

All my mom cared about was Max. He told her he was tired of us kids and left. She didn't want him to leave her! She practically kicked me out of the house, and then went into the bathroom. Did you know what the doctors found in Ce's body? A muscle relaxer! My mother used them. They were in the medicine cabinet. That's where my mom was before I left. She gave her one to shut her up—make Max happy—keep the child quiet. Maybe she didn't mean to kill her, but once her body went numb, the toy she played with, lodged itself in her throat—and since she couldn't move her limbs, Ce couldn't get my mother's help.

My mother killed my sister. Frank and the others weren't the real villains. It was my mom! Max was innocent—a jerk of a step-father, but not a killer.

Donna cried, “I'm so sorry, I'm so sorry.”

I nodded. I was sorry too. They weren't the ones I needed to punish. What had I done? What sort of person was I? Who did such things like this? Who burned their bullies alive? I wasn't any better than Frank. I used to be a jolly guy who wouldn't hurt a fly and I mean that literally. I wouldn't even swat at a bug. Not even roaches. How did I become so blackened inside? It was as if I were charred.

Lightning struck above us. Something blew me backwards, knocking me out.

“Hurry On Home”

I awoke, surrounded by a pile of soot. The warehouse was gone but every person inside was alive—including us. *How was that possible?* Michael stood over Donna, helping her up. “I always take care of you, don’t I?” He said. Donna nodded.

Where’d he come from? He wasn’t in the warehouse, was he? Everyone loved Michael about as much as they did Millie. Thank goodness no one died. Wait. How *did* we survive?

Lightning flashed and a strange feeling raced through me. “Hurry on home,” a voice said. Where was home? I glanced up at a boy with blonde hair and sharp eyes. Thunder rumbled, darkening the skies.

“I can’t, just yet,” I whispered.

Donna’s glasses dropped into the soot. Reggie’s hair straightened into silken strands along his back. Pete covered his ears.

“I can’t come home yet,” I said again.

The voice lessened, releasing me. I raced away from the others who walked towards the strange boy up on the hill. I could still see his eyes inside my mind. They ate straight through me creating an imprint.

I shook the fear away. It didn’t matter how Frank and the others survived. I was going to confront my mom. She’d killed my sister and I wasn’t going to let her get away with it! She was going to pay for her mistakes!

I ran, for the first time, without needing to stop. Sure, I grew breathless, but not like normal. My heart pumped harder and the fat around my waist felt more like muscle somehow. What was happening to me?

Up ahead, my mother and Max stood in front of their car in our driveway. I stood on the sidewalk across the street.

“I know what you did, Mom!” I shouted. Her eyes darted my way.

“What are you talking about?” She said.

“You killed Cecelia. It wasn’t Max.”

“You’re a stupid moron,” my Mother said. “How’d I get stuck with such idiots for children?”

Anger blazed inside me. “I’m going to kill you!” I screamed, racing forward. My body smacked into something hard. I fell to the ground. There was nothing in front of me. What was happening? I stood, trying to press forward. My hands hit a wall—only I couldn’t see it. I ran along the street, my hand against this ‘wall’, trying to find an opening.

“What did you do? Why can’t I cross the street?” I narrowed my eyes at my mother. She shook her head. “You’re going down, Mother. I won’t let you get away with this.”

Max wrapped his arm around my mom’s shoulders. She shook her head at me with disappointment in her eyes. “Let’s go, darling.”

“No!” I yelled, feeling my face burn. I leaned my cheek against the invisible barrier. “No!”

Lightning flashed in the sky. Rain pelted me and the voice infiltrated my mind. “It’s time to come home now.”

Hurry on home, Al.

I shook my head, tears pouring down my face. I didn’t want to follow the voice.

Hurry on home.

“No, I don’t want to. I wanna kill—”

Hurry on home.

“I need to teach her a lesson! She killed my sister!”

Right now, Albert.

I rubbed my eyes, no longer fighting the voice. “I’m coming,” I said. My legs shook and my eyes blurred from the tears. “I’m so sorry Cecelia. I loved you, so, so much.”

THE END

Subscribe to find out what happened to Kurt’s brother in September’s FREE Short!

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