

**Evidence Of Things Not Seen**

**Readers Theatre**

**For Five Actors**

**Written by Lindsey Lane**

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**Journal:** *We leave pieces of ourselves everywhere. Every time we meet someone, they take some of us and we take some of them. That's how it is. Little particles stick us together. Bit by bit. I think it's how we get whole.*

**Kimmie Jo:** Really? I might be the last person who saw Tommy Smythe?

I didn't hardly even see him, Sheriff. It was Friday afternoon. I was heading back to Fred. You know, Fred Johnson High, because of the Cinco de Mayo dress rehearsal. I had to—um, I had to go home right after school because, well, it was that time of the month and I had to change—anyway, I was driving back to Fred and I saw Tommy coming toward me on that red motorbike of his. Ruby. I heard he calls it Ruby. Isn't that the weirdest? I mean, I named my dolls but that was like in kindergarten. Is that something boys do in high school—name their vehicles?

Oh, sorry, Sheriff. Yeah, Tommy was driving away from school. I'd just gone by this place. You know, the pull-out. I really wish people would call it something else. Like the dirt patch. That's all it is. Do you know that guys at Fred joke about girls putting out at the pull-out and not pulling out at the pull-out? So gross.

**Alvin:** Hey, quit shining that fucking light in my eyes.

Do I look like I went to a freaking prom tonight?

My license and registration? What for? Is stopping at the pull-out illegal or something? All I was doing was sitting here. Besides, I don't have to give it to you. I looked it up online.

My hands *are* on the fucking wheel.

No way. I'm not getting out of my car. I'm not doing anything wrong. I swear. I stopped here because, well, they said they found Tommy's bike here and I didn't get to go on all the searches last week. He really liked that bike. He and his dad bought it out at our salvage yard. I thought I'd stop and see if, I don't know, maybe there were some clues.

**Journal:** *All possibilities exist. When I make an observation, all possibilities collapse into one. So, is it our observation that limits possibility?*

**Rachel:** Tommy believed anything was possible. If he could think it, then it was just a matter of time before someone proved it was real. That was why I liked being with him. He didn't think in confined, "normal" ways. Being with Tommy was like a free fall.

Yeah, I rode on the back of Ruby maybe a half dozen times. Maybe more. It was like being inside his brain. He'd go crazy fast and then he'd stop practically in the middle of the road and watch these flocks of birds dip and turn through the air currents. They looked like smoke to me. I don't know what they looked like to Tommy. I mean, we never said stuff like, "Oh, that's beautiful." Or "Oh, that looks like smoke." Looking at the birds together in the same moment was the conversation. I mean, if you're with a guy

who is thinking that each person, each thing contains waves of possibilities and those possibilities might exist in alternate dimensions, then you can kind of see how being together seeing the same thing at the same time is a pretty big deal.

**Nando:** My father called him a *brujo*. It means magician. I think he called him that because of how he'd show up out of the blue. We'd look up from whatever crop we were picking and he'd be standing there. Sometimes he'd be looking at us. Sometimes at the sky or the dirt. Then we'd go back to our work and when we'd look up again, he'd be gone. Like he disappeared.

Yeah, he called him that before he went missing. Afterwards, I asked him if he thought Tommy was dead. Like no longer breathing dead. He said what I thought he would say, that ghosts aren't dead. Ghosts are spirit bodies. They're alive to him. He talks to my mother all the time.

Me? I have no idea. I don't see the spirit world the way my father does. To me, Tommy was a *muchacho loco*.

**Journal:** *But what if there isn't an observer? Reality is still going on, right? If I'm walking in a field, I exist, don't I? There are things out there that are observing me as existing. There are bugs I'm stepping on. There are animals smelling me. Is that enough to create a reality?*

**Kimie Jo:** No, he didn't look any different, Sheriff. He was wearing his lab goggles so he looked like this nerd scientist on a scooter. But that was how he always looked.

Tall, skinny, kind of goofy looking. He would have been cute if he tried a little. He only had acne on his forehead but—

Oh yeah, sorry. It was ten to four. I know because I looked at my watch and knew I'd probably be fifteen minutes late to the dress rehearsal even though I was already speeding.

Oops, I probably shouldn't say that to you.

Did I wave to Tommy? No way. I mean, we're both juniors but we're really different. Like on two different planets. No, we're farther apart than that. He's like a gas molecule and I'm like a tree. Well, I don't know what we are. I am so not a science nerd. We're different. You don't hang out with people who are different than you.

**Nando:** Yeah, I talked to Tommy. One time, my father and I were out here picking up some extra workers. I think it was about a week or two before Tommy disappeared. Yeah, that's right, because we were pulling beets and potatoes that day so it would have to be April. I heard that high-pitched whine of his bike coming up 281. He skidded into the pull-out and started tearing through that trash can. He threw the trash everywhere. You should have seen it. Watermelon Rinds. Styrofoam cups. Empty water bottles. Soda cans. Bags of half-eaten food from the Whip In. He kept saying, "My notebook. Have you seen it? My notebook. Have you seen it?"

**Journal:** *I lost my notebook again.*

*Only now I'm wondering if I even lost it. I went into McCloud's classroom about eight times looking for it. It wasn't there. I swear it.*

*Then I go back in and there it is. How does that happen? I asked McCloud if it was possible for things to slip back and forth in the space time continuum. He said no. Then he said what was more likely was I went into another dimension so my relationship to time and space and objects changed.*

*So maybe I don't lose things. Maybe I go into another dimension.*

**Alvin:** I don't think he went into another dimension like kids at school are saying. But sometimes the way Tommy'd show up at the yard out of the freaking blue, it was like he dropped out of another time and space.

That's when we talked. At the yard. He'd ask me strangest shit. Like I remember one time I was showing him how I organized the yard. All the Japanese parts in one place. By year. It made sense to me. When you're building your own car, you want to know shit like that. Anyway, he asked me if you lived in a dimension where there was no time, would all the cars work with the same parts. Like there wouldn't be years and so there wouldn't be makes or models or crap like that. The dude could think up some weird shit.

He told me that time travel was totally possible. Like through wormholes. He said they already exist on a subatomic level. I told him if that was possible, would he mind looking for a 1980 Trans Am carburetor? He got real serious and said he couldn't do it because he couldn't go back to a time before the wormhole machine was created. So I said, maybe he could figure out a way to jump time without a machine. And he was like, "Yeah, maybe."

**Rachel:** I come out to the pull-out every day. I keep expecting he'll be here. That he'll show up like the way he walked into class with his head down, like he was late. Only he never was.

Yeah, I usually asked Tommy where he was going, but the day he disappeared he was already out the door before I could. I didn't always get a straight answer even when I asked. I mean, sometimes if I asked Tommy what he was doing, he'd say, "Talking to you." I had to be specific because he was very literal. Like I had to ask "Where are you going?" or "What are you going to do?"

The simplest stuff stumped him. Like the first time I asked him for a ride on the back of Ruby, I remember how he looked behind at the seat. I could almost see the thought bubble over his head, "Oh that's why this seat is longer than a regular bike seat."

That's what I loved about Tommy. He wasn't aware of normal stuff. Like that whole boy-girl thing—pretty much the way high school is set up—it doesn't compute that way for Tommy. I don't even know if I was his friend. Like his brain is so different, I don't know where I lived in it. Or if I did. No, that's wrong. I *was* his friend. He always smiled when I went up to him and said hello. I just couldn't expect him to come up to me and say hello.

**Journal:** *I think we create a God because life is mysterious. We don't understand the space in between the particles so we fill it with God. Except everyone is still afraid. Which is weird, because if there was some supreme being who created mass and gravity and life as we know it, then that supreme being would also create an intelligence big enough*

*to conceive of it, big enough to see all the connections, big enough see the spaces in between and not be afraid.*

**Nando:** My father made *me* clean up the pull-out. I was so pissed. The white kid makes the mess and the Mexican cleans it up. But you know what? I kept looking on the side of the road for the notebook. Why? Because he looked so desperate. Like he'd lost the most important thing in the world. You want to help someone like that even if you're pissed at them. I stopped the truck a couple of times because I thought I saw something white in the grass by the road. It wasn't the notebook. Just some pages.

You know what my father said every time I got back in the truck with another scrap of paper? "*Buen corazón.*" Me. I have a good heart. Me. I'm pissed at that kid and I'm looking for his stupid notebook. Why should I help him if he can't keep track of his own shit? Or clean up after himself? You know? But my father's right. Even if I don't want to, I help people. If you have a good heart, you know when you're doing the wrong thing. You know it and you can't do it.

Drives me crazy.

That *muchacho loco* is gone and I'm still looking for his notebook.

**Journal:** *Stephen Hawking said that if the rate of the universe's expansion after the big bang had been smaller by even one part of a hundred thousand million million, then the universe would have collapsed and no intelligent life could have evolved. That's pretty specific. It*

*makes you wonder if anything in life is random. No wonder people want to think there is a God.*

**Rachel:** No, I don't think his awkwardness made him depressed. We're the ones that thought he was weird. Not him. Wait, if you're thinking he committed suicide, you're crazy. He was way too curious. Quantum was blowing his mind. It's pretty deep stuff. I hung in there with him but he was off the map about it.

All of it. Superposition theory. Alternate dimension. Time travel. Black holes. He was—well, this might sound strange—he acted like someone who was in love. You know that first crush? When all you can do is think about that person and write poetry to them? That's where Tommy was with particle physics. It's all he could think about.

That's what is scary to me. When he was like that, he was so wrapped in what he was thinking that he wouldn't pay attention to what was going on around him. Like he might have been standing in this stupid pull-out staring at something or thinking something and someone drove in and grabbed him. You know, like a random act.

**Journal:** *72% of leading physicists believe in some form of multiple universe theory. They believe that the universe continually branches into countless parallel worlds. Whenever the universe is confronted by a choice of paths at the quantum level, it actually follows all the various possibilities.*

**Alvin:** I wish I knew where Tommy went. As strange as he was, I still liked talking to him. He made me think about school differently. Like my old man thinks it's a waste of

time. But seeing how smart Tommy was and the stuff he thought about, well, I don't know, I guess I wondered if maybe there was something I could learn that would, you know, help me get me away from here.

Like I built a car, man. I'm not stupid, right? I mean, if I can build a car, I must know some stuff, right? Like maybe I could do good in school.

I swear I don't know where he is. I know he believed all that shit he thought about. Who knows? It could be true. I mean, if I can build a car out of spare parts on a shelf, who's to say Tommy hasn't stepped into another dimension?.

I mean, in my reality, he probably fell in a sinkhole. But in his? Who knows?

**Journal:** *What if there is absolutely no observer? Then anything is possible. Anything. I could be anywhere. I could be dead. I could be sleeping. I could be on Ruby going to class. I could be in class. As long as no one is observing me, I could be anywhere.*

**Kimie Jo:** Do you think Tommy could be dead? Wouldn't that be creepy awful if I was the last person to see Tommy alive? Like maybe if I'd waved or stopped or talked to him, you wouldn't be interviewing me about Tommy. Like something might have changed if we'd done one thing different before. You know?