Angela Rolph

Andrew wants a normal and new life; he doesn’t want to be forgotten and erased from history.

Ghosted

I am an ordinary man. My name is Andrew Twist. I live in Suffolk, Virginia. The year is 2020. People call me arrogant because I don’t listen to their points of view, but I do the best I can to prove them wrong. There is a small town small-mind vibe here. We mostly have spooky cornfields and run-down homes. Some say we are cursed here. Strange things occur when the sun goes down. Something extraordinary has happened to me. I could have disappeared from history.

 Warm sunlight sent streaks through my bedroom window. I woke up to the shrill sound of the morning train.

“I tried talking to my wife, but she acted like I didn't exist. My two children jumped in bed. They jumped right through me. I clutched my person. I felt light as a feather. I pinched myself. If I had ruby slippers, I would have tapped them together. Something wasn't right. I started to cough. My throat made a sound like a radiator that hissed. I feel like I'm in a sauna in hundred-degree weather. I tried talking and even shouting at my children. No one heard me. My wife asked them if they had seen me.

They said, “We don’t have a dad, mom.” I knew my wife was next. I screamed like a banshee. No one heard a peep.

 I shouted, “Hello? Can you hear me?” I started to talk to myself. My legacy was being removed from this world. I ran to my friend Jake’s house, and he couldn’t see me.

 Nobody knew I existed. I coughed. I tried going home and getting medicine, but my hands went through the cough syrup bottle. Night’s eerie glow fell over my old town. I ran until my knees buckled.

 My cough started to get worse. I saw a nearby creek and ran to it. I cupped my hands desperately. I tried to drink water. All the water slipped away. It started to rain. I lifted my hands and shouted at God. I shouted profanities at God. The storm raged louder, still. Lightning crashed. Thunder hurled its mighty fists.

"This is my test, isn't it?" A voice louder than life itself came down.

"If you can prove to one person on this earth that your life has a deeper purpose and meaning, I will return your life. Watch your back closely. The devil will try to trip your senses, and you will become blinded with no escape. Be careful, my son. I’m always a whisper away.”

I felt lost. I ran to my childhood home. I sat on the wooden swing on the porch. As I rocked, I looked at my feet. They were starting to disappear.

“I am a ghost!”, I shouted to the heavens. I heard a deceitful voice whisper to me. It was the devil.

 “Your time is up! If you can’t figure out how to become visible by sunrise, you disappear forever. You will never know peace. I will make your unnatural existence horrific every single day. Your family will never give you a second thought again. You will be erased from time itself.”

My mission was clear. The answer rang in my ears. A haunted house two houses away from mine had been there for half a century. An old witch named Hazel lived there for many years. I started to fly. I blew through her door with urgency.

“Whose there?” shouted Hazel. “I can feel your ghostly presence. Do not hide from me!”

“My name is Tom,” I shouted. “State your business here.”

“I need your help,” I said. A curse has been put on me. If I do not break it, I will disappear forever.”

“This is not a curse, but a test.”

“God and the devil have talked to me,” I said.

“I don’t have much to do with god,” Hazel said. “If he spoke to you, you might as well listen. After sundown, this is one of the spookiest towns in the United States. Be on your toes. I have a potion that will make you visible for an hour. You must prove to the one you love the most just how important you are. Do not fail Andrew!”

The clouds parted. The sun began to shine through the trees. I flew back home to my wife. I tried to wake her up from sleep. I reached out and touched her cheek. She clutched her cheek where I had just touched her. She had felt something. I remembered all the good times we shared together. I remembered the birth of our children and the joy of raising them with my wife. I remembered the bad times and the times when we barely got by. All these times were worth it because I got to share them with her. Life was nothing without her. I was nothing without her. She and I were one. We shared a heartbeat, a love, and a purpose in life together. This couldn’t be the end. I wouldn’t let it.

“Bailey please remember me. If you forget me, I’ll disappear forever.”

“I remember, baby. Our life has been so beautiful together. We married young, and it has been wonderful these past twelve years. You sang that Dean Martin song, "You’ll Always Be the One I Love.” It was so romantic. I remember you, Tom. How could I forget all the years of love we’ve cherished together? You have given me two beautiful children. My life with you is better than I could have ever expected. I love you more with each passing day, my dear.”

My body started to glow. It spread to my fingertips. Bailey watched me as I started to become me again. My cough had disappeared. I kissed my wife to see if I could feel it.

“Wow, Andrew, I felt that!”

“So did I,” I said. I heard God whisper to me.

“Well done, my child. Your life will be yours to live. Choose your actions wisely and always take care of your loved ones.”

 I squeezed my wife’s hand, “Bailey, I’ll always cherish you. I’ll be yours forever, my love.

” The horror of this town was no mystery. It had always been there and now it is a part of my imminent history,” I whispered to God.

God said, “This town does leave a dark mark on its map of the world. Its story is part of your past.” It was night again. I heard a wolf howl vigorously to the moon.