

Prey – Stephen Gross

It feels like my chest is going to burst, but I keep running. The man is still behind me, and he's catching up. So I run, because hopeless though it is, this is the only chance of keeping Him from killing again. Or at least delaying the inevitable. I'd be lying if I said I could stop Him, even if I get away from the man He'd just find someone else.

I can see the next headline already. "Mad Butcher Strikes Again!". The more tasteful papers will leave out the specifics of the carnage, but there'll be some trying to capitalize on all the gory details. I nearly threw up when I read about the first one. I've always had a rather weak stomach.

The man is close now. I don't bother looking back, I know I only have seconds left. Maybe a minute if the adrenaline keeps me going. It won't really make a difference at this point; I could stop now, give up, and it won't change anything. But I can't just let Him have His prey. I can't just let Him win. I have to fight it, even though I know I'm going to lose.

The man's within reach now. He grabs my shoulder and, thrown off balance, I tumble to the ground. I turn to face him and he looms over me, grinning. The last thing I remember hearing is his laugh. Then He takes over.

I wake up with blood in my mouth. Every muscle in my body aches, my head's killing me, and I'm covered with scratches. I sit up, spit out the blood, and take in the scene. Most of the trees nearby have been knocked over, and the usually vibrant forest is silent. And, as usual, there's blood everywhere. He's gone now, left me to clean up His mess.

At least this one won't be missed.