

# Soulmates

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## Soulmates

A rude awakening!

I was jolted out of my pleasant dreamland and tossed headlong into a world of pain. Screams, pure and agonizing, reverberated throughout my head. During these first moments, I thought it was my voice, but the sounds subsided for a while and then rose in intensity. Fiery spikes of agony slashed and tore through my own head while I found myself replicating those sounds. But I never even opened my mouth.

I clutched at my head and began to writhe around the bed in agony. These explosions of pain made me feel as though I were dying. The pain grew more and more intense until I finally lay on the floor whimpering and motionless.

Eventually the pain subsided enough for me to pull myself up off the floor. And indescribable force, like the hand of God, compelled me to get dressed. I didn't know why... there was this incredible urgency... in what I was doing and... in what I had to do. Do? Do what?

Again the pain rushed over me like a wave. It overwhelmed me and I smashed against the wall. I felt it's coolness against my cheek. The unnamed force made me stand and I decided no matter what the pain, I had to keep going. A life might be at stake.

Suddenly a beautiful blonde haired girl's face flashed into my mind. It was a face I didn't know, yet it was one that signaled extreme danger.

I somehow managed to grab my coat and trusty nine millimeter Beretta pistol off the nightstand beside my bed as I stumbled out my apartment door. I fell into the driver's seat of my Mustang, dragging myself upright and sliding the key into the ignition. As it

roared to life, I sat back as another wave of pain and terror washed over me. I knew instinctively which way to go, but not my destination.

The car tore out of the parking lot, leaving long patches of smoking black rubber where it had been a second before. I can't really say... that I was actually in control of the car. Something else was. Not me, I knew that much. Because of this, I soon became oblivious to all that was happening around me. Although the pain subsided somewhat, it was still there, like a splinter embedded deeply. The blonde girl's face again materialized in my mind. This time a name emerged as well. Samantha. Samantha Strickland. From Long Island, New York. Suddenly I was overwhelmed with images of her. I felt and experienced her deepest thoughts and desires – Manhattan, Broadway, the ballet, how I loved chocolate, my best friend Alicia... wait a second. These memories weren't mine. Samantha's personality seemed to have fused with mine. It was incredibly strange.

Then I felt as though I had to save her. Save her? From what? It was there, but it was blocked out. Was it so horrible, so gruesome that it couldn't be depicted in thoughts? I began to think I was going insane. I was so confused over it all.

The pain returned with a hurricane force, making me almost lose control of the car. I swerved around a garbage truck that was making its first run of the day and narrowly missed it. The pain's return awoke me from the stupor that the Samantha girl's memories put me in. I noticed that I drove on and on as all time seemed to stand still. Rose Street passed. As did Red Rock Drive and Highway 95. Innumerable streets and roads became a blur before my impassive eyes.

Finally, after what seemed like hours, I pulled into the parking lot of Hillbrook Apartments, somewhere in the state of New York. I parked and got out, not forgetting the Beretta. The dashboard said it was 4:53 am.

The force propelled me onward, and I entered building 4-C. With each step, I could feel the pain increasing with every step. So intense was the agony that after I rode up in the elevator to the fourteenth floor, I collapsed onto the plush carpeting in the adjoining hallway.

The force that had propelled me to this place suddenly vanished.

I forced myself to continue by my own willpower, stumbling down the hallway, my eyes focused on the mahogany door of apartment 1403. I backed up about ten feet and started running directly at it. I slammed my shoulder against the door with all my accumulated might and it gave way. I fell to a heap on the floor by an old worn foul smelling sofa. I looked up from where I lay and surveyed the room. It was a one room apartment with the bed against the far wall and a window above it with the shades drawn.

I pulled myself off the bare floor to see a nude Caucasian man with a bloody knife in one hand and a quizzical look on his face. The girl, Samantha, lay beneath him on the bed.

“What the fuck...?” I heard him say. I knew my shoulder should be broken, but I felt no pain whatsoever... only the agony from Samantha’s unspoken screams. A dirty rag had been forced into her mouth. She seemed not to notice my entry but still the pain emanated from her.

“Samantha!” I screamed, but was it in my mind or my lips? I didn’t know which way she heard me, but she did. Our eyes made contact for a long moment before she spoke my name as plain as day. *‘Keith.’*

Her assailant’s voice broke our unspoken connection. “Who are you, bud? Here to save her or join in?” He flashed me a toothy evil grin. I continued to stare at Samantha, willing that connection we had shared back into existence. Her wounds the man had given her bled fresh and red. I ignored the man’s question as I picked myself up off the filthy floor, walking towards them.

“I guess not then,” the rapist said, awakening me from the hold Samantha held over me. He grabbed her by the hair, pulling her in front of him and placed the knife under her throat. “This ain’t no business of yours. Leave now and I’ll forget that you interrupted my fun.” He pressed the knife sharply against her skin and thin trickle of blood ran down the length of the blade.

“Leave her alone!” I shouted with all the authority I could muster.

“Get lost now!” Her neck bulged. I sucked air and stopped.

I had no choice. I had to kill him. I didn’t really know just what I was going to do, but it nonetheless happened. I willed Samantha to hear my wordless plea. I turned around and took a step towards the door. As I pushed my coat open, I slid my hand on

the handle of the Beretta, drawing it silently. I heard a scuffle behind me and I knew that Samantha had heard me. I spun, kneeling down as I reached out with the pistol. Samantha had forced herself away from the man and was in the process of falling to the bloody bed.

I didn't even have to aim. One shot. Bang. Suddenly everything became bullet time. Time slowed as I watched the bullet race its unmovable path directly for the man's left eye. The man's eyes registered pure raw terror as death came for him. Then time returned and the back of his head exploded, showering the wall with blood and skull. He slumped forward, the back of his skull a gory mess.

I dropped the gun to the floor and ran to Samantha's side. I wrapped my coat around her battered body. Looking deep into her magnificent blue eyes, we knew everything and needed no words. I cradled her in my arms and began the trip to St. Jerome's Hospital.

As I carried her out to my car, the full realization of what had happened to us this night finally stuck. A brilliant light engulfed us and we were no longer – it seemed – in this dimension. We were together and the light blinded us, yet we could not look away.

The aura of light told us that we were two of a chosen few. We were destined to fall in love in time, but through a twist of fate, we were brought together as one prematurely. We were to have the ultimate love – true love. Love so great, so wonderful, that we could and would revel in each other's thoughts.

We would no longer be inseparable. No one could tear us apart or destroy our love. No one. We would be together for the rest of our lives and beyond. We were of one soul. Bound by that soul, nothing could be kept secret or hidden. We communed on the highest level. We were soulmates. Now and forever.