*Chapter I: Unquiet Quiet*

The sky was gloomy and dismal, a perfect reflection of Seth Francis’s mood on this particularly boring Friday afternoon. Summer had just begun, and his parents were away on some sort of business trip; he never much cared about their affairs, as any typical sixteen year old. He was napping with the radio on, listening to some Journey on FM 104.2. Just as *Wheel in the Sky* ended, and the host came on to announce the next song (*Paranoid* by Black Sabbath), a loud crack of thunder shook the house, awakening Seth from his slumber. He sat up, somewhat startled, but mostly annoyed. He was in his clothes, having fallen asleep reading a magazine about cars, and made his way to the stereo. He turned it off, then listened for a moment to the silence. It was peaceful, at least to him. It was always quiet in his house when he was home alone; he never played music loudly, nor watched television, and the neighborhood he lived in was always noiseless. Of course, that was because he didn’t really live in a neighborhood; the Francis family lived quite in the middle of nowhere, Southern Washington to be exact. His father had inherited the house from an uncle some time ago, and the family decided to move from Phoenix, Arizona to the middle of nowhere. Seth was an only child, and having to leave his friends behind resulted in an “empty hole” in his life. He was not quick to make friends, and he spent most of his time playing the Nintendo Entertainment System he had gotten for Christmas the year prior. So where most kids his age were out with friends at the bowling alley or the movies, Seth was stuck at home, having no car to drive and no friends to hang out with.

He let out a long sigh, and made his way out of his room and downstairs, where he planned on making himself a sandwich for dinner. On his way out of the room he passed the calendar, which read June, 1986. When he entered the kitchen he peered at the clock hanging on the wall, which read five fifty three in the afternoon. A steady rain was smashing the earth outside, and the house was dim. Seth rarely bothered turning the lights on when he ventured into the various sections of the house, except when he was intent on making food, as he was now. He flicked the switch on the wall, and the kitchen illuminated with a yellowish glow. Seth made his way to the fridge and produced the ingredients for his sandwich; turkey, sliced cheddar, and bread. He was a simple boy, and also a fairly lazy one, so he never indulged in condiments or vegetables. Once he had crafted a sandwich worthy of no one really, he retired to the kitchen table to eat. As he sat, he listened to the rain; it had a steady rhythm to it, like a symphony of liquid taps and slams. He gazed out the window into the forest that surrounded the property. The only break in the woods was the road leading to the highway, where his bus picked him up for school every morning. It was a three mile walk to the highway, but Seth was content. He enjoyed walking the dirt road, listening to the sounds and inhaling the smells of nature. Of course, he always took his Walkman just in case the sounds of nature began to bore him, which they almost always did after about twenty minutes. As he sat listening to the beat of the sky, his mind began to wander.

Once he had finished his food, he sat thinking about his friends back in Arizona. He had had many good times with them, especially with his best friend Chase. Chase had a car, a beautiful Thunderbird given to him by his father, and the two drove that car all around town. Their favorite hobby was bowling; they loved the atmosphere, and all the friendly faces. The smell of the place was infectious; a deep wooden smell, with hints of tobacco and sweat. It was sweet yet sour, and every time Seth smelled something similar, he immediately thought of Chase, and the various adventures they had. He was planning on traveling back to Arizona to attend college with Chase, the two having agreed to bunk together and even rent a house when the time came. They wrote letters to each other often, Chase’s being filled with more tales of new adventures, and even a girlfriend here and there. While Seth was reminiscing on old times, he heard an odd noise; a sort of metallic pop, followed by the power in the house going out. Six o’clock had rolled around, and the sky had grown eerily dark. Seth was still able to make out the rough shapes of objects in the darkness, but he figured he might as well attempt to return the power to its original state. After all, he had plans of playing some Legend of Zelda later.

“Jesus, Chase, I bet you’re having loads of fun right now, eh?” Seth said as he fumbled his way up the stairs. He thought the breaker box was in the attic, and figured it wouldn’t hurt to check there. He remembered he had a flashlight in his room, and figured he could stop off there and pick it up on his way.

So with that, young Seth made his way into the abyss of darkness on the second floor, prepared to venture into the attic and restore the power.