

Sweet Tara

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Please do not post my story elsewhere.

A fun trip to a spooky old building turns into no laughing matter.

<https://www.lushstories.com/stories/supernatural/sweet-tara.aspx>

I. The Story Of Alice Alice Grey was a dear little thing, she lived with her parents and worked hard every day at her job in the local drapery store. Her family may have been poor, but they got by, paying their way in the world and earning respect for their dutiful efforts and high moral standards. Alice was a fanciful girl, always dreaming of love and raising her own family, a dream that appeared to be coming true when a handsome young gentleman took an interest in her. This young man came calling with flowers and tokens of affection, causing Alice to blush at his forward behavior. He convinced her that his intentions were honorable, so she put her shyness to one side and they started walking out together. Their fondness grew into love and talk of marriage was in the air. Alice enjoyed the sweet kisses they shared and stopped guarding her virtue quite so vigorously, the two lovers united in passion as God intended, man and woman, joining as one in blissful harmony with each other. The fruit of their passion grew inside Alice and for the sake of her honor she asked her true love to bring forward the date of their wedding. He agreed, but she never saw him again, he betrayed her and disappeared as swiftly as he'd first arrived, abandoning her to face the consequences of their actions on her own. Poor Alice, as her unborn child grew in her womb things went from bad to worse, she lost her job and her father threw her out for the shame her sinful behavior had brought upon his house. She was penniless and homeless, frightened and hungry and only begging or stealing food could sustain her. For her crimes the police arrested her and threw her in jail to await the verdict of a judge. Unfortunately for Alice she had the wise and humane Judge Stevens to pass sentence on her case, he knew that this was no hardened criminal that stood before him, so showing her sympathy and providing assistance were his noble intentions. Alice, he decided, was morally defective, the consequences of which had doubtless lead to her wanton lust and criminal actions. This sorry young woman needed healing not punishing, so instead of a short prison sentence, he committed her to an indefinite stay in a lunatic asylum, where she could receive treatment for her sick mind. Such judgments were not that unusual in England eighty years or so ago, many unmarried mothers ended up in mental institutions for therapy and rehabilitation. Alice was locked away amongst psychopaths and only ever saw her baby at the moment of his birth, the helpless newborn was quickly taken from

her as she was deemed unfit to provide proper maternal care for her child. Rejected as a lover, a daughter and now as a mother, Alice became very depressed and saw nothing but sadness in her life. No one ever came to visit her and only her book on spirituality gave her any hope. She read of other plains of existence and she prayed it was true so that someday she could walk free and not have to endure the pain of the repeated betrayals and false judgments inflicted upon her. If only she could reach another realm, free her soul from torment and maybe even be reunited with her baby, get to nurture him as was her natural right as his mother. The doctors duly made observations and notes on Alice's depression, her ridiculous delusions and withdrawn behavior. She was diagnosed as schizophrenic and an ideal patient to be used as a test case for new procedures deemed suitable for her type of illness. By daily injection her young body was pumped full of insulin, so much insulin that she was sent into coma and seizures. This was a good response, or so some psychiatrist thought, and to improve her chances of recovery still more, electro convulsive shock therapy was administered on a regular basis. It seemed the right thing to do, the perfect remedy for dealing with Alice's depression and delusional mind. Alice was partially cured, well at least she stopped talking of suicide, the pity was she stopped talking at all. She drifted in silence along the asylum's long corridors, before being returned to face hours upon hours of solitude in her isolation cell. Those hours of lonely imprisonment became years and eventually a whole lifetime. For Alice was never allowed to leave that institution, she spent almost fifty years in the foul and evil Hellingly Mental Asylum, a Victorian madhouse built on a grandiose scale to hold thousands within its wards and padded cells. If only someone had come for her, believed in her, then they could have rescued her. But nobody ever did come and Alice was lost to this world. Hopefully she did reach that other place she dreamed of, or some kind spirit came forth to collect her, to show her true mercy by answering her prayers and putting an end to her misery. Hellingly Asylum still stands, hidden deep in the Sussex countryside where the lunatics and innocents it imprisoned could be quietly consigned to oblivion. It's long since closed and the horrors are over for poor Alice and her kind, but the memories of the crimes committed against them haven't faded, their suffering is still too recent to be easily forgotten or forgiven. Hellingly must live with its shame a while longer, but soon it will be demolished... and Alice's soul and many others will finally be released. May God bless them all.

II. Our Journey To Hellingly

My girlfriend Hazel and I both have pretty much the same image when it comes to fashion, short denim skirt, little black boots and any old top that comes to hand. It's the short skirt that holds the whole look together, and it's nice to show a bit of leg and know you look sexy, it makes you feel good about yourself. Quite a few of the other girls at college turn up every day in a mini skirt of one style or another, so we like to be a little more daring and go that bit shorter. But there is such a thing as too short and that's Melanie's choice of skirt, she wears the most outrageous creations, showing off far too much of herself and always looks so easy and cheap, which she is I suppose, seeing as there aren't many guys around here she hasn't dropped her panties for. We both really like Melanie though, despite her tacky dress sense and slutty reputation, she's so kind hearted and there's no disputing the fact that she is absolutely gorgeous. None of the other girls seem to have much time for her, maybe it's because she is so gorgeous that they don't want to know her, you do feel as if you pale

into insignificance when you're stood next to her. It's like watching a top model perform as Melanie gets into the back of the car, she's all tits and legs as she bends to slide in. Everything she does is a photo opportunity, like the way she throws back her long dyed blonde hair and beams a lovely warm friendly smile across her pretty face. "Jesus Melanie, how short is that skirt?" is Hazel's greeting. "Well, I've my image to keep up," replies Melanie, as she wriggles to cover her panties. She does make me laugh with the way she pokes fun at herself, she loves dressing up slutty and makes no apologies for doing so. She's the hot college queen but she doesn't get much thanks for it, none of the guys that have been with her are prepared to stand by her. They all fuck her a few times then dump her because they think she's a well used embarrassment, which is a shame as she would make a great girlfriend for any guy with the courage to stick up for her. Well we're Melanie's friends now and we'll stick up for her, and it's our pleasure to help her out on her psychology project. We're off to some creepy place Hazel knows where Melanie can do a bit of research into buildings that can play tricks on the mind, such as causing subliminal thoughts or even experiences of paranormal activity and all that kind of nonsense. I don't believe in ghosts or evil spirits, but even so I'm glad we're not going at night. I get freaked out enough as it is watching horror movies and from what little description Hazel has given us, this place we're off to might just give us a fright or two. It'll be a laugh whatever happens. I think Melanie really appreciates our gesture of friendship, she's chatting away constantly as we hit open road, with Hazel driving us along nice and smoothly in her dad's expensive Mercedes. I'm impressed by how good a driver my girlfriend is, and even more impressed she's allowed to use such a big fancy car. Melanie too is full of admiration for Hazel's safe driving skills, our hot sexy friend is all relaxed and has made herself comfy by sprawling out across the rear seat, making yet another explicit display of her perfect long legs. "I wish I could drive," Melanie says, "I keep failing the test." "So do I," replies Hazel. "What?" I shriek out, "you mean you've got no license?" "Oh relax Steffanie, I only failed on minor things." "So you've got no insurance? What if your dad finds out?" "He won't will he? He's still on holiday." "What if we crash or something?" "Well we're not going to are we?" Melanie thinks it's funny but I don't, it's so typical of Hazel to pull a stunt like this. She's constantly getting up to no good and living up to her nickname. She looks like a Foxy with her red wavy hair, and she certainly acts like one. "Don't go too fast then," I tell my cheeky vixen. "I'm only doing sixty," but she does slow down a little. Well at least she's not showing off, and I do feel safe sat up front next to her. I suppose Hazel's trickery is part of what makes her such fun to be with, one reason of many why I love her so much. "Happy now?" Hazel asks me. And places her hand on my bare leg. "Yes, but I still don't approve." Although I don't mind her driving one handed for a moment. "Oh shut up," she says, and squeezes my thigh, turning me on like she knows she does. "You're like a married couple you two," pipes up Melanie. I don't think she noticed Hazel's wandering hand and I doubt if she was seriously inferring that Hazel and I are lesbians, I don't consider myself as being one, I just happen to be in love with a girl. A daft way to think I know, but that's how I feel. I'd love to tell someone though, reveal the secret that there's a thing going on between Hazel and I, and who better or more deserving than Melanie to be the first to know? "Shall we tell her?" I ask Hazel. "Tell me what?" Melanie asks, definitely not suspecting anything. "Steffanie and me, we're an item, we're in love." Hazel tells her.

"Rubbish." "Seriously Melanie, Steffanie is my girlfriend." "No way, you're both too girlie, you wear mini skirts and make up and everything." "Well how can we prove it to you then?" Hazel asks her. "I don't know, seeing you kissing I suppose." "Right," and Hazel and I blow a kiss to each other. Melanie is far from satisfied with our feeble display, she wants to see us kiss properly. So we agree to have a good snog for her benefit when we arrive at the spooky building, which I'd forgotten all about with our talk of girl on girl kissing. Melanie keeps me from thinking about what scares might be in store, by giving us her views on sapphic love. Firstly, she decides she doesn't mind if Hazel and I are an item, she would still want us as friends. Secondly, she would quite happily kiss both of us and maybe even get naked and let us play with her tits. Her third view is the most definite of all, and that is there's no way she would even consider the "other thing" we might do. With a little prompting the "other thing" turns out to be licking pussy. "Steffanie's really good at that, aren't you my sweet?" says Hazel. "Oh thank you Foxy, that's because I love you so much." "Yuk, I'm going to be sick," comments Melanie. We're all having a good laugh at each others' expense, but the jovial mood soon changes when Hazel slows down to take a turn into a remote country lane. We're almost there, just a couple of miles of deserted road to go, and there's nothing but fields and woodland all around us. "This place is going to seriously freak you both out," announces Hazel. "Where exactly are we going then?" I ask her. "Hellingly, the most enormous, creepiest, abandoned, lunatic asylum." "Oh Jesus," is my first reaction. "Oh cool," is Melanie's. We sit in silence for the next few minutes of driving, and my imagination fails to come up with anything nearly horrific enough to prepare me for the abomination we're about to see around the next corner. A travesty, a crime against humanity is what appears and stands looming over us, with it's multitude of black windows like soulless eyes watching our every move. Hellingly Asylum is grotesque and enormous, if ever a place was haunted then this monstrosity is surely it, in fact I'd be amazed if it wasn't haunted. "How did you find this place Hazel?" Melanie asks, after several minutes of silent staring. "My brother brought me here." "Did you go in?" "No, but I know where to." "We're not going inside are we?" I ask with immediate panic. "Of course we are," replies Hazel. "But it's horrible and all locked up, and look at the signs, it's not safe." "Oh their bluffing." I don't think we should go inside, it's not what I expected at all, it's far too horrific and evil. It looks dangerous and the warning signs outside repeatedly announce that as fact on almost every window. I also think it would be disrespectful for three girls to go larking around at the scene of such human torment, I'm already upset by the place and God knows what repugnant sights are inside to add to my mounting distress. "Oh don't be so soft Steffanie, we'll just have a quick look," Hazel tells me. "We'll stick together then won't we? And no tricks Hazel, no stupid jokes." "No tricks, I promise." Oh Jesus, this isn't my idea of fun anymore, but I'm not staying outside on my own, it's scary enough out here as well. Hazel drives on, looking for somewhere to hide the car as the signs say they have security guard patrols, but I reckon that could definitely be a bluff. She parks up behind a derelict outbuilding and the moment I'm dreading is getting closer. "You've got to both promise we'll stick together," and I'm really quite nervous now. "We promise," they both say, taking my nervousness seriously. "Well, let's go then," says Hazel. "Aren't you forgetting something?" asks Melanie. She means the kiss we promised to have for her to witness, but it doesn't feel the right thing to do now,

and Hazel and I both look at each other not sure about the creepy location we're in. Our love and attraction for each other soon changes the mood and it would be nice to hold my lover, feel her lips on mine and break the feelings of dread I'm experiencing, feel something pure and good happening in these dreadful surroundings. When our lips meet it's a lovers' kiss we share, I can feel Hazel's tension, her courage is all a front and I can guess why she and her brother didn't go inside that time they came here. Our kissing is a release, strong and powerful with wide open mouths pressing hard together. We have a hunger for each other that's still fresh and new, we love to kiss long and hard. "Oh wow," exclaims Melanie, getting all excited. I'm not surprised she's excited, my kiss with Hazel is fantastic and must be quite something to watch. Our heads change angles but our lips never part and our forceful kiss turns into a soft and sloppy French snog. I'm mouthing my lover as first she caresses my breasts and then slides her hand up my skirt, teasing my pussy with her intimate fondling at the top of my naked thigh. "Oh God, that's... that's so..." poor Melanie is lost for words. "Now do you believe us?" Hazel asks her, after breaking the kissing. "Sure, I believe you, kiss her again," and Melanie wants an encore. We have one last kiss, a really gentle and silly one at first, we keep giggling as we stick out our tongues so they can play touching tips. Melanie really loves seeing that and for the finale Hazel removes her hand from my thigh, takes hold of my chin, and absolutely ravishes my mouth with hers. "Oh yes," Melanie cries out, "can I try? Go on, kiss me like that." She's lost herself in her enthusiasm, forgotten the protocols of love, she's no thoughts or concern for any jealousy her request might cause. But it's not really a lover's kiss she wants, she doesn't want the emotion, she just wants to know what it's like to kiss another girl. There would be no conditions, no consequences to worry about, no pain from broken promises of love. "Who do you want to kiss you?" Hazel asks her. "Both of you," an eager Melanie replies. "Well we..." "Oh go on, go on, it'll just be kissing, it won't mean anything. Well it will but..." "It's alright Melanie, we understand," says Hazel, calming Melanie down. "Kiss me when we get inside," says Melanie, "we'll spread a love vibe in that horrid asylum." That's a good idea from Melanie, and already my feelings have changed about entering the loathsome Hellingly. If there is such a thing as a spirit or a soul then we three have a spirit as well. We might be three silly young girls with little physical power, but we're not wicked and our loving kind hearts are our strength and defense. I reckon the gentle feminine force is a strong one in nature, and far from being disrespectful our presence might do good in that forgotten and lonely asylum. I've already half convinced myself we're off to face some kind of evil, I'll be preaching hell and damnation next. The walk to find the entrance is a long one, we have to get around the back and that takes some doing due to the sheer scale of the place. But it's an obvious route and only Melanie struggles a little as her choice of footwear isn't exactly ideal, at least she's only wearing two inch heels today instead of her usual three or four. All the time we're walking we have Hellingly bearing down over us. Whatever might be in there has plenty of time to prepare for our reception. I wonder how the resident lunatics of one hundred years ago would react if they were still here and could see Hazel and I holding hands and in love. I wonder what those same crazies would make of our gorgeous friend Melanie, looking so provocative and sexual in her revealing short mini skirt. Well maybe one or two crazy ghosts are still here... And maybe we'll find out their reaction... III. Inside The

Madhouse I've never been so nervous in all my life as I am the moment we enter Hellingly Asylum, I keep reminding myself we're the only people in here but it doesn't seem to be helping me much. It's strange being so scared of phenomena I don't even believe in, primeval forces that our modern world has exposed as a myth. Nowadays only superstitions lurk in the shadows, so it's difficult to understand why I'm so frightened of something I'm sure doesn't exist. Hazel is nervous as well, but she thrives on adventure and challenging herself, her foxy character gets off on a good thrill and that's why she pulls her cheeky tricks. It's not personal gain she's after, she wants the adrenaline rush of getting away with each daring escapade she dreams up. I'm not so sure about how Melanie feels, there's a lot more to her than simply being gorgeous and dressing like a slut. She's got courage that's for sure and I'm beginning to realise there might be other reasons why all the boys that have fucked her don't want to keep her, I reckon she could be difficult to satisfy in more ways than one. Our first problem upon entering Hellingly is simply comprehending the awesome size of the main function rooms within it. The asylum is from another age, an era when public buildings were built to the most lavish of standards and everything seems out of proportion. It's like a palace with its high ceilings and doorways and grandiose windows allowing the sunlight to flood in. "Wow," is all we keep hearing from Melanie, as we enter each vacuous room. We feel swallowed up by the place, our feet crunching on broken glass and other debris as we wander aimlessly around. Everywhere we go the decay is well advanced, with crumbling plaster and decrepit furniture left standing here and there. The evidence of vandalism is all too obvious, with charred woodwork from clumsy arson attempts and graffiti sprayed by urban explorers all over the filthy walls. The bright sunlight and the vast spectacle of the asylum's interior helps to override the nervousness we share with being inside such an intimidating building, our curiosity grows stronger than our apprehension of what we might encounter next. Melanie is leading our tour and Hazel and I are behind her, our eyes constantly scanning ahead as we look out for any dangers that may threaten our friend, but there's nothing to fear. After we turn one corner we find the first obstacle in our path, large double doors are blocking our advance and to proceed further we'll have to open them. Now my nerves really kick in again and my heart is pounding away as Melanie takes hold of the door knob and hesitates. "Shall I?" she asks. We stand still and listen to silence, every sense in our bodies is on full alert for horrors that clearly aren't here. But what's behind those doors? We've no idea. Once more my imagination conjures up images of ghostly lunatics rushing forth to envelop us. "The beauty always gets it in horror movies," says Hazel. "Oh thanks very much," replies Melanie. "Sorry, only joking," but it's a rotten joke in the circumstances. Melanie takes her hand away from the door knob, breathes in to compose herself and pulls her tight mini skirt down a little. That's a first, normally she pulls it up before making her grand entrance. Not that her sudden new found modesty makes much difference, her skirt still barely covers her bum. "Here goes then," and our leggy friend swings open the door. "Holy Moses," exclaims Hazel. The most impressive room of all is revealed, a huge ballroom with a high arched ceiling and tall windows with their bottom ledge a good ten feet off the floor. What a lunatic asylum would want with such a large entertainment facility I don't know, but the owners certainly built one big enough to hold hundreds of people or more. "La, la, la," and Melanie goes spinning off towards the middle of the dance floor, sounding like a true

nutcase enjoying her first lunatics' ball. She looks a delight with her sexy long legs and it seems like she's dancing on clouds with her feet swirling up years of dust as she twirls around. "Stop Melanie, stop!" Hazel yells out. Melanie goes rigid immediately and soon realises she's standing close to a spot where the floorboards have started to give way. It's a perilous route back to safety and we stand with our arms outstretched to grab her at the first opportunity. It's our first real scare and a reminder we need to keep up our guard against what Hellingly may come up with. It's creepy and we all feel jumpy but after Melanie's fright we have our fear under more control, we can cope with structural dangers far better than illusions of ghosts. We work our way cautiously around the edge of the ballroom and our tour becomes almost pleasant as we reach a main corridor with the sun streaming in more than ever. The asylum's secrets keep drawing us onwards, teasing our morbid curiosity to find something truly sick to shock us. We go down another route, turn off again two or three more times and enter communal wards which must have been home for the less seriously disturbed patients. Some wards still have iron bedsteads scattered around and between each ward is a variety of rooms. It's the contents of these rooms that freak us out next, hideous things such as treatment chairs with restraining straps, bathtubs with electric dials, and worst of all there's equipment for dealing with children. Most rooms are empty, but some look as if they were left in haste, leaving everything in place as it was when the asylum was still functioning. As we explore, I lose sight of Hazel and that's when it hits me just how frightened I still am of this terrible place. I cry out in panic for her and I'm almost in tears by the time she reappears a few seconds later. She doesn't laugh at me and neither does Melanie, beneath their bold exteriors they're both still as nervous and intimidated by this place as I am. "Can we go soon," I ask them as we all share a hug. "Ten more minutes, then we'll head back," replies Hazel. "I'm not sure I remember the way back. Do you?" "er... I think so," she says, but she doesn't sound so sure. We've been walking without taking our bearings, we've entered a labyrinth and there's no signs to guide our way back. So many corridors and rooms look the same, and together we realise that for quite some time now, all the windows we've passed have been barred. "Don't worry," says Melanie. "We'll soon figure it out, and we've hours of daylight left yet." "This is why we've got to stick together," I tell both my companions. We press on unawares of just how lost we really are, the asylum has drawn us in and together we seem to be losing our sense of self preservation. We make more twists and turns, consoled by the fact that we've plenty of time, that we've nothing to fear and we'll easily find the same route for our return. There's a distinctive smell about the place I hadn't noticed at first, or is it only in the immediate area we're in? It doesn't seem important, it's quite a sexy smell, sort of spicy or even musky. I like it, it calms me down and as we proceed it grows a little stronger. I take hold of Hazel's hand and we exchange faint smiles with each other, we stop walking for a moment to share a little kiss and gently stroke each others' faces. "We're alright," she says, "it's just a building, just bricks and mortar." Of course it is, this place was abandoned years ago and all the loony doctors and patients are long gone. It's just us three girls in here now and we'll have a bit of fun soon taking turns kissing with Melanie, who is ten yards ahead by the time Hazel and I have had our little lovers' exchanges, but we've no chance of losing her. "Hey Melanie, when do you want your kisses?" I call out to her. "When we get to the scariest place," she

replies. "How we going to find it?" "It's up there," she calls back to us, now standing still and pointing around the next corner. It takes a few seconds to catch up with her to see what she's on about, which is a wide stone staircase spiraling up to the floor above. It's the first staircase we've seen and could lead anywhere, except there's an unsubtle clue as to where it goes painted by some joker in big red letters on the wall, 'This way to hell,' it reads, with an arrow pointing up to avoid any doubt. There's a macabre humor about the graffiti that's pointing out our way, but at least it's preparing us to witness something especially depraved, even by the standards of this wretched place. The spicy smell is much stronger and it's weird how we don't want to question what to do next. We climb the stone stairs in what feels like silent obedience, and I'm only too aware of how strange it is that I don't seem to feel so frightened anymore. As we ascend the staircase I'm more interested in looking up Melanie's short skirt than watching out for oncoming perils. I'm like a lecherous old man getting my kicks at the sight of her lovely, curvy young butt cheeks. I can't wait to kiss her and I'm getting turned on with the thought, but my head feels dizzy and I have to stop to press my hand to my temple. Hazel is doing exactly the same thing. "Do you feel strange?" she asks me. "Melanie," I whisper in reply. "I know," Hazel whispers back. We press on and when we reach the top of the staircase we find large steel bar doors hanging open to the left and right of us, they're protecting the most daunting and longest corridors we've yet seen. This is it, this is the hell that the red sign proclaimed, the cold black heart of Hellingly. Both corridors are as dimly lit from the outside as each other, with only small and heavily barred windows here and there which are all too filthy to properly serve their purpose. The decay and dilapidation is far worse than below, there's mould almost everywhere and the arched ceilings have collapsed in places, but the concrete floors look safe enough. "Which one?" asks Hazel, and Melanie decides without answering, she heads off slowly to the corridor on our left. It's so long and dark we can barely make out what's in the far distance, but it looks like a dead end with some kind of black furniture facing us. We will have to walk a good deal further to figure out exactly what's ahead of us. The wall to our right is the outside wall, so nothing leads off, but to our left a succession of single solid steel doors hang open, and we can guess straight away what these doors protected, or rather kept in. "This must be where they locked up the real psycho cases," says Hazel. Neither Melanie nor I answer her as it's clear by the strength of the cell doors that the custodians weren't taking any chances. All of the steel doors are still more than capable of doing their job, even after hanging in place for over one hundred years. Each door has a tiny spy hole protected by thick, unbreakable glass and a small steel wire dome, no doubt much needed precautions to save the onlooker from having their eyes poked out by the lunatic locked inside. We enter the third cell we come to and the atmosphere hits us straight away, it's overpowering, so claustrophobic with a sickly sweet smell. It's even gloomier than the corridor with the cell window being only a few inches square and up far too high to provide any kind of view. "You'd go nuts locked in here." remarks Hazel. "Look at this," says Melanie, ignoring the obvious reply. She's pointing to some writing scratched into the wall that looks like it's been there a very long time, 'Sweet Tara,' it says, with a wretched plea of 'save me' scratched underneath. As our eyes get used to the dimness we see other words faintly inscribed on the wall. The words are all devoted to Tara, either calling to her for salvation, or thanking her for her kindness and strength.

There's no real clue as to who Tara was, but we can assume her admirer was a lunatic called Alice, as her name is also scratched on the wall more than once. "That mad Alice must have really suffered in here," I think out loud. "She wasn't mad, she was innocent," Melanie says. Both Hazel and I look at our friend and don't need to say what we're thinking. "Sorry, I just kind of sense it. Don't you?" Well funnily enough I do sense something, but all I can say is that it's not an unpleasant sensation, despite the dark grimness of the cell and its walls around us. "Who do you think Tara was?" I ask, knowing full well the answer can only be a guess. "I think they were lesbians," says Hazel. "What makes you think that?" "It says 'come for me Tara' over here," she replies. "That sounds like a more spiritual sort of coming," suggests Melanie. "What, like she's a Goddess or something?" I ask her. "Maybe, I don't know," We will never know who or what Tara was, but she obviously meant a great deal to the poor Alice. Tara was her only hope it appears, and it looks like she did come in one way or another, because Alice has scratched those messages of thanks to her on the wall. But Alice must have been crazy to have been locked up in here, and it's sad to think of her all alone and endlessly crying out for her friend or savior. We leave the sweet smelling cell and walk past a few others, each slightly different and some still have remnants of padding that once lined their walls. As we approach the end of the corridor we can see that further progress has been prevented by it being crudely bricked up. I still can't make out exactly what the object is that's facing us, it looks like some kind of chair. A few more steps and the mystery thing reveals itself more and we realise what it is. "It's a wheelchair," says Hazel. She's right, but it's a wheelchair like no other we've ever seen. It's a relic from the past made almost entirely from wood, it's straight and rigid in form with no subtlety about its function, what makes it particularly gruesome are the foot plates which look so clumsy and heavy. It looks as if it were designed to restrict its occupant rather than aid them, it's the most ghastly thing imaginable and has a presence like nothing else we've seen in Hellingly. The wheelchair directly faces us with its handles against the wall and appears like it's been there forever. It's covered in filthy dust and it's so very ancient looking, but I reckon it would still work. We cautiously walk closer towards it but each of us is nervous of this evil looking thing. "Dare you to sit in it Melanie," says Hazel. "No chance," she replies "Steffanie?" "Never, never in this world." I tell Hazel. Not for a thousand pounds would I sit in that wheelchair, I fear it would never release me and instead would wheel me straight to the abyss where it belongs. We turn away from the chariot of horror and enter the last cell there is to look in, this one arouses our curiosity the most as it seems to be the source of that spicy kind of smell. This cell had an occupant with a problem that was all too obvious, 'fuck filthy cunt,' and other explicit misogynist comments are scrawled everywhere we look. Melanie begins reading each vicious obscenity aloud, seemingly trying to arouse Hazel and I by doing so. As Melanie bends to read writing lower down the wall, my feelings of dizziness return. I find it hard to focus and my thoughts for my friend return to ones of a sexual nature. I want to have her here and now in this lunatic's cell, I want to use her hard and violently. I want to punish her and force her to satisfy me. I want to see her crawling naked and terrified on the floor, and when I've done with humiliating her I'll pass her to Hazel. I'm sure Hazel will have plenty of similar sadistic demands to make of Melanie, and after we're both finished with the promiscuous whore, we'll leave her behind for the pleasure of Hellingly. That idea really

appeals to me, it would be funny to betray her like all her so called lovers have done, how right they were to just fuck her and dump her. We could even beat her up a little, leave her bloodied and bruised on the cell floor, leave her sobbing and heartbroken with the knowledge that there really is no one in this world that gives tuppence for her or her feelings. Mmm, that sexy spicy smell, that delicious young female flesh before me. She's nothing but a helpless girl and her defenses are useless, she's a pathetic cheap slut and doubtless will enjoy Hazel and I taking advantage of her. We both start closing in on the lewdly dressed tart, we're like hungry wolves, eager and ready for the kill. "What, what is it?" Melanie asks, backing away from us. Her stupid sweet nature is struggling to accept that our intentions for her are no longer friendly. I'm really enjoying this feeling of power except there's a voice faintly crying out in my mind that's spoiling the moment. It's my voice I'm hearing, it's calling from deep within my soul and it's getting louder. My inner voice is screaming at me now, it's telling me to forget all about logic and reason, to listen to my true instincts and draw back from perdition, it's pleading with me to get away from this dreadful cell's sick influence and save Melanie not betray her. The very moment I start listening to my conscience and reject thoughts of abusing my sexy friend the spell is broken, the seductive scent becomes rancid and there's an awful creaking sound coming from the corridor. "We have to go," I tell Hazel and Melanie. Hazel looks shocked and Melanie looks relieved, she's the first to leave the cell but she doesn't get very far. "What's wrong Melanie?" She doesn't answer, merely raises a finger to point at the the bricked up wall and not once taking her eyes off it. Hazel and I leave the cell and turn to look at what's bothering our friend so much. I almost scream out at the the sight before me. "It's moved," whispers Hazel. It's definitely moved. The wheelchair is now about two feet away from the wall it was previously touching, and it's at a slight angle facing the cell we've just left. I take Hazel's hand and she takes hold of Melanie's and the three of us stare wide eyed at the filthy wheelchair. "Huh," and we're all convinced it moved ever so slightly again. "There's something not right about that wheelchair," whispers Hazel. "Yes," both Melanie and I whisper back. We remain motionless, something else isn't right but I'm not sure yet what it is. "Can you feel it," mutters Melanie. Every nerve in my body is straining to establish what this sensation is. I do feel something, it's like when the atmosphere changes before a storm and the air pressure increases. It's like when you can easily tell if someone is angry and frustrated. I sense hatred and danger all around us. The rancid smell is returning and getting stronger, Hazel's hand feels clammy in mine and I can feel her shaking. "It's coming closer," says Melanie. Does she mean coming closer or getting stronger? I doubt if the difference matters. "Where's it coming from?" asks Hazel. I'm not sure, but I think it's coming towards us from the other side of the wall that's blocked off the corridor. Whatever it is it feels like it's heading our way and I doubt if that wall is going to do anything to stop it. When the wheelchair creaks and rolls slightly forward we all look at each other and we all scream it at once. "Run!" As we turn to run the rancid smell suddenly becomes almost overpowering, the feeling of pressure is so strong it's hard to move but the instinct for survival sets us off. We go flying down that gloomy corridor with me and Hazel running side by side and Melanie hot on our heels. We're getting out of here and we're getting out fast. We soon clear the corridor and next I'm taking out four steps of the staircase at once in my rapid descent, I bounce off one wall on the way

down and bounce off another at the bottom. Then it's straight down the corridor we started from and I'm going so fast I can't make out where the next turn is, I take the first one I can and hope I'm going the right way. As I make the turn the fucking wheel chair from hell is coming straight towards me and I can't stop and go crashing over it, I react with a roll and end up in a heap on the floor. The wheelchair's on it's side with a wheel spinning around as Hazel appears and narrowly avoids the same fate as me. "Oh Jesus Hazel." "It's not the same one," she yells to me, knowing what I'm thinking. She's right, it hasn't got those foot plates but it's just as horrible and I'm sure it was coming to get me. Maybe not, maybe I was going so fast I imagined it. Maybe we're imagining everything that's happening but there's one thing we can be sure of. "Melanie? Where's Melanie?" cries out Hazel. Fuck, fuck, fuck, this is the one thing I was so scared of above everything else, getting split up. We have to go back for her no matter how scared we are, we have to go back for our friend. "It's all in our heads right?" asks Hazel. "It's got to be, it can't be real," I reply, but it sure feels real enough. IV. Sweet Tara Comes The mind is very a strange thing, you can have such conflicting thoughts and reactions in a matter of seconds. I want to flee this dreadful place and save myself from harm. But there's a stronger instinct overriding my desire for easy survival, and that's a sense of duty to our friend Melanie. Hazel and I have to face our fears and head swiftly back to where we last saw her, in that awful corridor by that loathsome wheelchair. Our minds have to focus on reality, be unswayed by the illusions that are perverting our senses. It can't be true, but that smell is still here and that feeling of pressure is still strong. What were we running from? We can't think about that now, we have to shut out everything except what we can see. There's nothing physical here, and only something with power beyond doubt is going to stop us from rescuing our friend. We want her back, and as we climb the stairs we fled down minutes earlier, I say to myself Hellingly can't have her. It's hard to focus again, everything seems blurred and fuzzy, I can't hear our footsteps as white noise is filling my brain. I'd go crazy if Hazel wasn't by my side, but what of poor Melanie? We have to find her quickly before she loses her mind - or something even worse. We reach the corridor and that fucking wheelchair has moved further towards us, but that's not the worst horror we see. There ahead of us are Melanie's shoes, cast off no doubt in her efforts to run faster. "Oh God no," says Hazel, "what's happened to her?" She has to be somewhere in here and now when I think of it I'm certain I never noticed her following us in our flight down the stairs. The atmosphere in the corridor is becoming intolerable, I close my eyes and grit my teeth, I am not going to surrender to the evil of Hellingly, I am not going to succumb to it's tricks on my mind, I am not leaving here without Melanie. "Fuck you," I shout out loud down the corridor at that awful wheelchair. Hazel has tears running down her face, but she too is not going to surrender. I take hold of her hand and together we stride further into the corridor to claim back our friend. The rancid smell feels like it's all over us, clinging and forcing against us, but we press on regardless until we reach the first cell we went into. The cell door is closed and there's a faint voice coming from inside. It's Melanie. She's taken sanctuary inside and is repeating the words that are inscribed on the walls. She must be sat with her back to the door, keeping out whatever it was she felt chasing her - if anything was chasing her, my mind is still far from certain as to whether we're sharing delusions or not. "Sweet Tara, save me," is what we hear Melanie saying over and

over. "Melanie, it's OK, open the door," I softly call to her. I have to say it more than once, she keeps repeating the same words like a chant or a prayer. I'm not sure if she can hear me so I call out to her louder, she stops her pleas for deliverance and after a few seconds opens the door. Hazel and I both sigh with relief at the sight of our friend standing before us, quite clearly unharmed. "You came back for me," our beauty says, smiling and opening her arms wide to greet us. "Oh Melanie," and we rush forward to embrace her. "We're so sorry Melanie," I tell her. "But you came back for me," she repeats, "and now Tara is here and we're safe." Has she gone nuts with her fear? She doesn't look crazy, she looks irresistible and Hazel kisses her first, just a little kiss on the lips before pulling back so my lips can share in the mutual joy of her safety. Melanie is all soft flesh and hormones in my arms, she's so sexual and I'm soon hypnotized by the sheer pleasure of kissing her. My feelings are nothing like the sick lust I had for her in that other cell. In here it's something beautiful that's happening and we're spreading a love vibe in Hellingly just like she said we would. I draw strength from holding her, my earlier terror now replaced with feelings of relief. I want more of her and her response is to want more of me, we kiss with open mouths and touching tongues. She's so inviting, I can't resist the temptation to move my hand between her legs, to feel and press against her pussy through her panties. Only for a second or two do I have my hand up her skirt, but those brief seconds are enough to feel her feminine dampness. She's delectable, she's delicious, how could any guy who has had her dump her so readily and not want her over and over again? There's such a big sigh from Melanie as our mouths part, she looks as if she's dissolving before us. I hand her back to Hazel, so she too can have a longer and more lingering kiss with our beautiful friend. Melanie is so turned on, she's writhing her hips as Hazel takes her turn to feel under that tiny short skirt for the treasure beneath. Hazel goes further than I did, her hand slides inside Melanie's panties and I see Melanie tense for a moment as my lover's fingers begin to gently explore her pussy. It's delightful to watch them kissing and caring, it's neither sordid nor cheap, it's simply a physical expression of feminine love and it's power is all the stronger for existing in such a dark and evil place. As I watch them I begin to realise who Tara might be and why Melanie believes that she's here with us and made us safe. I look with new eyes at Alice's scrawled messages and now I'm certain I understand them completely. Tara is the the feminine force that I only half jokingly thought of before we entered the evil corridors and cells of Hellingly. Tara is the spirit within us that shows true compassion, she is our savior and she gives us the power to endure the terrors and horrors that are set on destroying us. Whether the evil we felt earlier was real or delusional is irrelevant. All evil is born in the mind and courage and love are it's enemies. Tara does exist, she's inside every woman and we can call upon her anytime if we choose to accept her. We do have a soul and that gives us a choice. By coming back for Melanie we chose to face our fears and not run from them. We chose to stand up for what we believe in, we chose friendship and loyalty and love, we chose Tara and that's why she's here to protect us. We can't help but cry, we know we've won and with Tara within us we can never be defeated by Hellingly or it's kind. We know that Alice won too and our tears are for her also. This madhouse claimed her body but it never claimed her soul. Alice is free, her spirit is with us and together we're going to walk and not run from this place. We will be safe, and the scent of sweet Tara will be all around us as we leave.

stefanie xxx