

Excerpt from full-length play *A Day of Dreaming* published by Eldridge Publishing ([www.histage.com](http://www.histage.com)); to read full play, click here: <https://histage.com/a-day-of-dreaming>

NOBODY CAN HEAR YOU SCREAM – 6:30 a.m.  
By Claudia Haas

CAST: 3

MARION: (female) older teen; enthralled with horror stories

ANA: (female) older teen; trying to take a winning photograph

HAROLD (male) older teen, Marion's brother; photographer extraordinaire

(MARION is by the bridge. Her brother HAROLD is just inside the bridge.  
MARION is dressed in black. She fancies herself Morticia Addams or a female Stephen King.)

MARION

HAROLD! Stop snooping in the Dreamer's Journal and come out here. It's dark. And spooky.  
HAROLD!

(ANA enters.)

Oh! Hello! I was just ...

ANA

Calling for Harold. I heard.

MARION

Are you one of those Madison-County-Bridge hunters?

ANA

Sorry? Are there people who hunt bridges? Is there a bounty?

MARION

Don't be coy with me. Just saying, this wasn't in the movie.

ANA

What movie?

MARION

The Bridges of Madison County? The only thing of worth to come out of this town. Although it did get a bit sappy – could have used a bit more horror. Do you like horror?

ANA

No.

MARION

Then you shouldn't be out here alone ... in the dark ... before the first light.

ANA

I want to photograph this bridge at sunrise. Then I'm going to win a thousand dollars and that'll show him. He'll never question my worth again. And when he begs me to come back – I won't!

MARION

You're entering that contest sponsored by Sunrise magazine?

ANA

Yes.

MARION

Are you any good?

ANA

Of course. Sure. Yes.

MARION

You shouldn't tell strangers your plans. Best to be mysterious. You never know who you will meet. Like suppose I told you that I plan on winning that contest and I don't suffer losses easily.

(ANA moves away scoping out the place. MARION follows.)

ANA

Quiet. With no one around.

MARION

Harold and I aren't no one. But I like it. It's the kind of place where no one can hear you scream.

(Beat.)

ANA

I'll just wait in the car....

MARION

If you're going to take a prize-winning photograph, best to check out all the angles. Down that path is promising.

ANA

It's ... still dark. There might be spider webs.

MARION

Oh honestly– who knows who's out here? A spider could be the least of your worries.

ANA

I think I'll stay here. Near the road. Near my car. With my phone. That has an emergency button.

MARION

You're in the middle of nowhere. Check your bars.

(ANA does. Probably no bars.)

No worries. If anything happens, Harold and I are here.

ANA

If you're trying to scare me. It's working.

MARION

Just be on high alert. (Whispering.) They never did find the body.

(HAROLD enters from the bridge.)

HAROLD

Marion, are you trying to scare her with your horror story?

MARION

It's a fact. The body was never found. Is that a great first line or what?

HAROLD

I'm Harold.

ANA

I figured you must be.

HAROLD

This is my sister, Marion. Dreamer of all things sinister and black.

ANA

We met.

HAROLD

So, here to take a sunrise photo?

ANA

How'd you know?

HAROLD

That's why people come here at sunrise. Nobody actually watches the real sun rise. Do you have your shot all figured out?

ANA

I figure Mother Nature will do all the work and I'll just snap it.

(ANA looks around and faces west. She fiddles with her camera which she doesn't understand.)

HAROLD

The sun rises in the east. That way.

(ANA twirls around.)

ANA

I knew that.

HAROLD

So, you're going to win the contest that I usually win.

ANA

Why not?

HAROLD

Because it doesn't look like you've done this before.

ANA

How hard can it be? This is a pretty place. The sun rises. Click. Done. Send it in. Win. And show my ex that I can do ... some things.

HAROLD

You realize that all over Madison County there are photographers who understand their cameras ready to take a sunrise photo. And they're all going to send it to the same contest.

ANA

You mean people have been here before?

MARION

Sunrise. Sunset. The world's been here snapping photos of corn.

HAROLD

It's coming! The golden hour. Nobody move! Well. Actually, both of you, move! You're blocking the view. And it only lasts a few seconds.

(The sun starts to come up. HAROLD is checking the settings on the camera. ANA just starts clicking away.)

HAROLD (cont'd)

What are you doing? Did you even check your ISO?/

ANA  
/I just/

HAROLD  
/What's your shutter speed?/

ANA  
/I don't/

HAROLD  
/Is this your first photograph?

ANA  
No! I've taken lots of selfies.

(The lights brighten.)

HAROLD  
It's here. Get out of the way. (Beat.) Please. You too, Marion. I have enough photos of you.

(MARION poses.)

MARION.....

(MARION gets out of the way. Harold nudges ANA out of the way. HAROLD focuses over the bridge and clicks. He lies down and focuses over and under around and clicks. He kneels and clicks.)

All right you two – smile.

ANA  
What? No!

HAROLD  
SMILE!

(They smile. Like they're on automatic.)

HAROLD (cont'd)  
Nice. And ... done. That was a workout.

ANA  
I didn't get one photo. And now the sun's up. Does that mean I have to come back tomorrow and do this all over again? Because I got up at 4 a.m. to come here and 4 a.m. is not my usual rising time. I can't believe anyone gets up at 4 a.m. Although I heard that farmers do. But I'm not a

ANA (cont'd)

farmer and now I know for sure I'll never be a farmer but I thought I'd be a photographer because they don't have to tend their crops, right?

HAROLD

How long have you been at this photography thing?

ANA

(Checking her watch and counting on her fingers.)

Fifteen hours. Actually, nine hours if you don't count the six hours of sleep I got last night. Do the sleeping hours count?

HAROLD

Why not?

ANA

Then fifteen. I bought the camera yesterday at 3 p.m. and decided to take off and capture sunrises. Because they're impressive.

HAROLD

And you want to impress.

ANA

Definitely. It's life and death. A "to be or not to be" situation/

HAROLD

/Got it. It's important to you. To capture the sunrise you have to be one with the camera. Let me show you. Come on, I won't steal it. Hold mine. It's worth a lot more than yours.

(They draw close.)

First... you need to set the ISO to low. Sometimes mid-range. You will know once you are friends with your camera.

ANA

ISO? Like "in search of?" Is the camera in search of something?

HAROLD

It's the sensitivity of your camera's sensor. You're going to do this to control exposure. You're going to need a high aperture and of course, you want to control the shutter speed.

ANA

Wow. You actually know stuff.

HAROLD

I love playing with light.

MARION

He's a natural with the camera. Takes all the photos for the High School yearbook and then some. He's going to win the contest.

ANA

We'll see.

MARION

Because things happen to competitors. Just remember what I said. Out here, "Nobody can hear you scream."

HAROLD

Don't start that chant again.

MARION

Nobody found the body.

HAROLD

THERE'S NO BODY! (Beat.) Not that I know of.

ANA

You two are just rude. I came here to get a sunrise photo and I didn't even get that. Because you pushed me out of the way, insulted my camera and did not let me do my thing. I had a plan!

HAROLD

Plans are good.

ANA

Everything was worked out in my head. I was going to show my boyfriend... excuse me ... my ex-boyfriend that there was more to me than being ... well ... you know. An object. Yes! He objectified me! I was his ornament and when I called him on it, he said, "Well, what else can you do? Do you write? Draw? Sing? Run triathlons?" And I told him, "What do you know? I am photographer!" And then I planned on winning the sunrise photo contest in the local paper and ... well ...

HAROLD

You'd show him!

ANA

Except/

HAROLD

You've never taken a proper photograph in your life.

ANA

I grew up with an i-phone. I took tons of photos of me and my friends...

HAROLD

Making duck faces...

ANA

Sometimes. I'm really good selfies. See?

(She snaps a few selfies to go with each of her descriptions.)

ANA (cont'd)

Comedy, tragedy, horror, adventure, cooking, runway model, goofy, cold, hot, thirsty/

HAROLD

Not bad. I like this. Can you give me a few pointers?

ANA

Let all your inhibitions go. Be one with the camera... one with the word....

(ANA throws out words and HAROLD and maybe MARION pose.)

Marathon! Moon walk! Dancing Queen! Penguin! Limerence!

MARION and HAROLD

Limerence?

ANA

That's about being totally infatuated with another person. Something I know nothing about. Anyway, with all my camera experience, I thought, how hard can a sunrise be?

HAROLD

And you found out that light's tricky. Light moves. You have to sense that and tell the camera – that's what all the settings are for. Although if you look here –

(He takes her camera.)

HAROLD (cont'd)

See that little picture of the sunrise? It's a clue. And if you click on it, your camera will make all the correct settings. Wait. What's that? Oh – that's good. When did you take that?

ANA

It must have clicked when you pushed me.



HAROLD

Look at that angle. And how the slight tilt moves the light. It's an amazing photo.

ANA

Really?

HAROLD

I think it could win.

MARION

But Harold should get some credit. After all, he did push you.

ANA

I'll ... think about it.

MARION

Nope no thinking. Just do it. Harold, get some paper from the Dreamer's Journal. Let's draw up a contract right now.

(ANA starts to move away.)

You're not going anywhere. Remember... nobody can hear you scream out here. I think there's a storm coming. It could be a dark and stormy morning. The kind where the rain comes in torrents and violent gusts of wind throw cars into ditches. Later, when the storm has passed, the townspeople will notice your forlorn car in the ditch and go to check on the driver. But you're not there. Nobody ever found the body.

ANA

You wouldn't.

MARION

Do you want to find out? I'd really like the prize money. (Approaching ANA.) I want to self-publish a collection of horror stories. You could be in it ... who knows?

HAROLD

Don't mind her. She lives in a world of darkness. It's actually what I love about her. She searches for the dark and I look for the light. I'm starving. Let's grab some breakfast. Care to join us? We live about a mile up the road.

ANA

Are your parents home?

HAROLD

They're out in the fields this time of year.

ANA

Is it secluded?

MARION

Very. I could murder someone in my home and –

MARION and ANA

Nobody would hear you scream.

MARION

How'd you know?

ANA

I'll pass.

HAROLD

Too bad. I have a really good photography collection of sunrises. Could give you some tips. Meanwhile, send in your photo. It could win.

MARION

But if you won you could self-publish my book, "The Missing Bodies of Madison County." Iowa would eat it up. And you could take photos of the missing bodies?

HAROLD

How can I take photos of missing bodies if they're missing?

MARION

We'll figure it out. In a mystery there's always something to figure out.

(MARION and HAROLD exit. ANA is left with her photograph.)

End of Scene