

Zero to Sixty

He looked over the edge and jumped. The force of the warm wind quickly rushed past his gray beard and wrinkled face, hugging his ears and creating a vacuum of silence where all he could hear now were his thoughts.

As he plunged towards the ground, he realized he forgot to close the Smith account before lunch like he promised himself he would do. These days remembering to do anything was a chore, as was life itself. Descending past the sixtieth floor he began to long for those days of the past where everything was simpler.

“Where has the time gone,” he began to think to himself. His fortieth birthday party was a blast, a bit more subdued than the prior parties, but still fun. The face of a man in his prime, but beginning to age with stress, eyed the ground below that approached rapidly.

Money, house, wife, children. Life couldn't be better. These are the things we dream of, but can't appreciate because we lose focus, don't have time, even lose desire. The fresh faced thirty year old looked as confident as he felt, even as he rushed past the thirtieth floor at an alarming rate.

A smile washed over his relaxed young face when thinking about all the fun of college. Being on your own was such a thrill. Meeting new people, going to parties, every day was a new adventure. These are the things we remember in life. Now the image of the ground became clearer as he rushed past the twentieth floor.

The look of uncertainty grew on the pimply face boy as he approached the fifteenth floor and remembered all the ups and downs of high school. Things seemed so complicated then, but only now did he realize how simple life really was after reflecting back on those times years later.

The cracked and gum stained sidewalk was in full view now and closer than he could have imagined. The young boy flashed a look of appreciation for all he had, no matter how simple. Funny thing was, it was too late; it was over. Impact.

Word Count: 390 words

Extreme Circumstances

By Merle Drown

It happened on a Tuesday while I was driving home from work, not thinking of much, certainly not thinking of extreme circumstances. I mean you don't, do you, ever think of extreme circumstances. A damned Tuesday, you know, most ordinary day of the week. I didn't call Dale about dinner like I usually do because I had a late lunch. An eleven o'clock meeting ran over, so the boss, big spender that she is, sent out for sandwiches. By the time we got them, it was two o'clock, and I ate two, the tuna and the egg salad.

Something was off with one of them. They both had mayo, and mayo, you know -- anyway, so my stomach was already up and down in the car. I couldn't eat a thing. If I were a guest on one of those TV cooking shows, I'd pass every dish by, even dessert, put my hand right up in front of the camera and all.

So, as I said, I wasn't thinking dinner when I pulled in our driveway. Dale's car wasn't there. For a minute I sat wondering where she was. On the radio, they talked about the deficit, and I said to myself, I'll be eighty years old, half-deaf, living God knows where with Dale, and they'll still be talking about the deficit. Course, Dale made the eleven o'clock news.

I walked in the house and just as I set the baklava from lunch on the kitchen counter -- because Dale loved baklava, and to tell the truth, I don't need the sweets -- the phone started ringing. I don't remember who said extreme circumstances, the cops or the doctor. Maybe it was me. After awhile I realized I'd eaten that baklava. And it's been that way ever since.

Word Count: 303