

# Presage

*by* Chad Smith

Uh... hello.

Claire.

It went to your voice mail.

No. That's good.

If I remember correctly, you... you are out with Tony and Shawna. Celebrating Tony's promotion.

Okay, look. I'll just get to it.

You don't really know me.

You are going to think this message is really weird when you hear it.

It's extremely important that I call and leave it though.

Tonight you are out having fun with your friends, and that's great.

I am calling to tell you what's going to happen tomorrow.

First thing in the morning you will wake up and listen to this voice mail.

Yeah, like I said, you will think it's weird.

You'll shake this message off, take a shower, get dressed, and start your day.

Sunday. It will be Sunday tomorrow.

I remember there is a pile of homework you've been putting off.

You're going to want to spend the whole day catching up.

Oh, and writing. You will try to make some time for writing.

The coffee shop is the best place for you to get your work done so you'll head down there.

You'll get a table and order the usual... Um...  
Triple shot, tall, iced mocha.

Next an annoying kid will be bouncing a ball and running around the coffee shop. The kid's mother won't be paying attention and the kid will knock your drink over with the ball.

Mocha will get all over your papers.

The annoying mother is going to race over, apologize profusely, and scold her annoying child.

A man at the table across from you... you won't notice him at first...

This man will jump up and help you clean the spill with a stack of napkins. He'll gingerly dab the coffee off your papers and books trying not to smudge your writing.

You'll be flustered.  
The man will order you another drink.

He will be unbelievably handsome. He's going to tell you his name is John.

Sorry...

Hold on one second.  
Uh...

His name is John. You'll think he is beautiful.

John will be so nice and thoughtful. You're going to find him easy to talk to.

He'll ask you to sit at his table. You forget your pile of homework, and spend an hour talking with him. You guys will talk about books and writing. He'll say that he is a struggling writer too.

Then he's going to invite you to get a late breakfast with him and you'll accept.

Your friends will call it a whirlwind romance. Everyone will be happy for you.

Claire finally found her soul mate they'll say.

Two months from tomorrow you and John will get married.

The wedding you always dreamt of. It will be a lovely service out in the forest with all of your friends and family there.

A little over a year from tomorrow you'll give birth to a beautiful baby girl. Your daughter will light up rooms with her smile and angelic presence.

Okay... I'm out of time.

I told you all of that just to say this:

Whatever you do tomorrow, do NOT go to the coffee shop.

Look, I can't tell you how I know these things, but you MUST believe me.

Do your best to avoid the coffee shop in the morning.

When I was your age I received a message just like this one... I thought it was crazy.

I didn't change course, and life hasn't been the same since.

Please.

When you wake up tomorrow, take a different path.

I think you are such an amazing person...

Okay.

Goodbye.

