

Early Decision

by Erin Fitzgerald

We set out at dawn because Melinda said she had one more thing about Albion Tech to show me before we met my parents at the cafeteria for breakfast. My head felt like it had a coat of rubber cement on it. Melinda said forget the kegger last night, what we're about to do will help you figure out whether you want to apply here.

We saw one other person across the foggy half-lit quad, a sad-looking tall kid with glasses and a canvas bomber jacket that didn't come down to the top of his pants. You always see at least someone, any time of day, Melinda said, though not loud enough that he would have heard. It's comforting, she also said. I don't think she knew him.

We went up the steps of a building she told me was called Tweezer or Tweedle or Tweeter, and then through a bunch of halls that all looked the same. We stopped in front of a door that had nothing on it, unlike all the other doors in the hallway. No memo board, no posters, no notes. I wouldn't have thought it weird if Melinda had knocked or just opened the door — I'd seen enough of that already — but she reached into her pocket and pulled out a key. No ring, no tag, just a key.

When I open it, she said, you go for the legs. Hold them down no matter what. I'll get the top half with her pillow. You'll see. This place will finally make sense to both of us.

