

# A Life Twice Told

*by* Foster Trecost

Walking to work, Lawrence Settler was struck by a bus as he crossed a one-way street. He was killed instantly. His final thought had been, *Nothing's coming*. He had looked in the wrong direction.

Had he not been struck by a bus as he crossed a one-way street, he would have reached his office building in about eight minutes. Once there, he would have exited the elevator on the thirty-first floor and walked the short walk to his desk.

At his desk, he would have hung his coat against the wall so that it faced outward, and then placed his hat on the hook provided so that together they resembled an invisible man. He would have paused to admire his handiwork; he sometimes felt invisible.

He would have found his affairs to be in the same disarray they had been left, with nothing new but a short note taped to his phone: *See me*. It would have been written by his boss. He would have known why.

As he walked to the office of his boss, he would have passed three people. He would have spoken to two, but neither would have spoken back. When he entered the office of his boss, he would have been terminated by an anonymous female from human resources. His termination would have come as no surprise; the anonymous female would have.

Escorted from the building at the arm of an armed guard, he would have walked to the nearest open bar. It would have been nine-thirty in the morning. The time would have been of little concern. After two hours of ale, he would have pleaded, *Help me*. After three hours of ale, he would have consumed the courage needed to confront Mrs. Settler, but before he reached his apartment, he would have been struck by a bus as he crossed a one-way street. He would have been killed instantly. His final thought would have been, *I hope something's coming*. He would have failed to look in either direction.

Had he not been struck by a bus, he would have reached his apartment building in about eight minutes. Once there, he would have exited the elevator on the thirteenth floor and walked the short walk to his apartment, where he would have found his wife in bed with an anonymous female. The affair would have come as no surprise; the anonymous female would have.

He would have felt as though he had just been struck by a bus  
But that already happened.

