

Truth in Time

By

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Prologue

It was July eighteen back in nineteen fifty-six in Waterford, Georgia. This town was located between Columbus and Atlanta, Georgia.

It was a somber afternoon in one of the three viewing rooms at the Delaney Funeral in downtown Waterford.

At the end of the room was a casket with potted flowers on the floor.

Inside the casket laid Erica Conner a twenty-two-year-old mother and wife to Jesse Conner. Erica looked so peaceful in her light blue dress.

The sounds of young women blowing their noses were heard at the other end of the room while they sobbed. Some of those women were childhood friends of Erica and couldn't believe her life ended so soon. They all talked about living a long life in Waterford.

One of Erica's old friends walked up to the casket. She glanced down at Erica. The woman got teary-eyed while she glanced down at her. She remembered Erica as a sweet teenage girl so full of life that would babysit her six-year-old daughter. The woman walked away, blowing her nose into a handkerchief. She recalled how happy Erica was the day she gave birth to her only son.

At the other end of the room by the doors sat Jesse Conner who was Erica's husband of three

years. Jesse was a blue-eyed twenty-four-year-old, muscular man and sported a black crew cut. One trademark with Jesse was that he loved to wear brown snake skinned boots. He wore them with his cheap black suit for his wife's funeral.

But today, Jesse also sported a giant goose egg on the left side of his forehead, which was the result of a confrontation where he lost. The encounter was with an intruder in their home three nights ago that took away Erica's young life.

Jesse stared down at the casket. He appeared to be distraught but fought hard to show it. He always felt that if a man cried, it showed a sign of weakness. And Jesse didn't want to appear to be a weak man in front of anybody.

Two chairs down from Jesse sat his blue-eyed three-year-old son Ernie in his black suit.

Ernie looked around at everybody and was confused. He was confused as to why his mother was sleeping inside that wooden box. He wanted her to get out and be with him. He wanted to know why people would walk over and look at his sleeping mom. He thought this was a strange event he didn't understand.

Fifteen minutes had passed, and the room in the funeral home was thinning out with people.

Matt Conner and his wife Wilma, both in their fifties, entered the room and walked over to Jesse. Matt was a muscular man of intimidating size with a buzz haircut.

"Son, we're heading over to the cemetery," Matt said while he placed a comforting hand on Jesse's shoulder.

Wilma's eyes welled up while she took one last glance at Erica in the casket.

"Okay," Jesse replied while he continued to stare at his dead wife.

Matt and Wilma left the room.

Jesse stood up when Judge Buford Peabody and his lovely wife Cindy, also in their fifties, entered the room.

They walked over and took one last glance at their daughter in the casket.

Cindy's eyes filled with tears while she looked at Erica. She remembered the day Erica was born like it was yesterday, and now her only daughter was dead. Cindy got weak in the knees and started to drop to the floor. Judge Peabody sensed this and grabbed her right arm and kept her up on her feet.

Judge Peabody thought it would be best to get Cindy out of the room.

He walked her back to Jesse.

"I know your dad will catch this guy and I'll make sure he gets what he deserves. I'll give the longest sentence the law allows," Judge Peabody said, and he looked furious.

"I know he will too and thanks," Jesse replied and looked like something troubled him, so he avoided looking at Erica's casket.

"We're heading out to the cemetery," Judge Peabody said then he walked Cindy out of the room.

Ernie got out of his chair and walked toward the casket.

Jesse stared at the other end of the room, still avoiding eye contact with Erica's casket.

Ernie climbed up on a chair in the front row by the casket. He stared down at Erica.

"Wake up, mommy. Please wake up," Ernie pleaded with his dead mother.

Jesse looked perturbed with Ernie. He walked down to the casket.

Ernie glanced at Jesse with teary eyes.

"Mommy won't wake up. Why won't mommy wake up? I want her to play with me," said Ernie while tears rained down his small cheeks.

Jesse looked mad. He grabbed Ernie's left arm and yanked him off the chair and almost pulled his tender arm out of its socket.

Ernie cringed in pain when his feet landed on the floor. He started crying while he held his left arm.

Jesse glared down at Ernie. "She's not getting up. So quit crying, or I'll give you a damn good reason to cry," Jesse said through gritted teeth and glaring eyes.

Ernie got scared with Jesse's glaring eyes. He peed his pants.

Jesse saw the wet stain in Ernie's pants and got furious. He started removing his belt.

Ernie shook in fear, knowing what this meant.

Beth Whitfield was a drop-dead gorgeous stacked twenty-one-year-old blond with an hourglass figure and soft brown eyes.

She entered the room and saw Jesse with his belt in his right hand. She frowned and stormed over to him.

She smacked Jesse hard on his cheek. "You will do no such thing! Not today!" she scolded Jesse.

"Beth, I need to make a man out of him and peeing your pants is not conducive of being a man," Jesse replied and looked determined to give Ernie a whopping.

"Jesse, he's only three years old! I will not let you treat him like the way dad treated my brothers. I will not!" Beth replied in a raised voice and gave Jesse a look that she meant it.

"Dad used his belt on me, and I turned out just fine."

Beth ignored Jesse while she knelt down at Ernie. She felt sorry for him while she held his hand. "Let's get you cleaned up, Ernie."

Beth frowned at Jesse while she walked Ernie away.

Jesse reinstalled his belt while he watched Beth walk Ernie out the room. She was the only woman Jesse would obey besides his mother.

Chapter 1

Twenty-five years had passed, and it was now Wednesday, July fifteen in nineteen eighty-one in Waterford, Georgia.

It was a beautiful sunrise with no clouds in sight for miles for the entire day across Georgia.

Inside a one-bedroom apartment of the Waterford Arms Apartment Complex lived Ernie Conner. He was now twenty-five years old and looked like a nerd.

He slept alone in his bed and had a smile while he dreamt about having a sexual encounter with a naked drop-dead gorgeous woman.

The digital clock buzzed from the small bedside table by his bed. It was now seven in the morning.

Ernie's eyes opened and cringed at that annoying alarm sound. He looked disappointed and wanted to go back to sleep and return to his hot steamy dream. He knew that wouldn't happen no matter how hard he tried, so he reached overturned off the alarm. He slowly sat up and yawned. He slowly got out of bed.

Ernie dragged his feet across the carpet while he headed to the bathroom.

He passed by a dresser where an old picture of his mother Erica and Ernie when he was two years old was in a frame. His dad Jesse wasn't in the picture.

On the wall above the dresser hung his framed college diploma for a Bachelor of Science degree in Aerospace Engineering from the Georgia Institute of Technology.

Ernie went side the bathroom. He started his morning ritual of getting ready for another day of work.

Twenty minutes had passed, and Ernie, dressed in khaki pants with a dress shirt and tie, walked through the parking lot of the apartment complex with his lunch bag and thermos in hand.

He walked over to a blue 1980 Toyota Tercel. This was his first brand new car and was his pride and joy.

He got inside his Tercel, started it up, and backed out of his reserved parking spot.

He drove off through the lot.

A little while later, Ernie drove his Tercel down Fay Avenue in town.

He drove past a True Value hardware store that was once Frazier's Hardware Store in the old days.

Ernie drove his Tercel a little farther down Fay Avenue and went passed Woolworths. The store looked run down and was on the verge of closing down. The

Across the street was an abandoned building that was once the old "Conner Chevrolet" car dealership. It closed down six years ago and relocated.

A little while later, Ernie drove his Tercel down Elliot Avenue. He drove past the "Conner Chevrolet" dealership. This dealership was more significant than the older one and was built on the northern side of town five years ago. The owner was Ernie's father Jesse who took over the family business five years ago hence the newer location. Ernie opted not to work in the family business, as he loved airplanes more than cars.

Ernie eventually drove his Tercel down a four-lane road to the Atlantis Aircraft plant located in the northwestern area of town.

This plant was built in Waterford back in 1964 when Atlantis Aircraft was experiencing a considerable

growth spurt. They picked Waterford because of some tax-incentives they were offered by Mayor Henderson. This plant specialized in the General Aviation sector and built two and four-seater single-engine airplanes.

Ernie parked his car in the employees of the parking lot.

He got out with his lunch bag and thermos and headed off to the office entrance of the plant.

While Ernie walked closer to the front entrance, he came upon the motorcycle parking area.

He spotted a red Harley Davidson Electra Glide parked in its usual spot. It belonged to fellow engineer Louie Rodriguez.

After he entered the building, Ernie headed to the second floor. He walked through the large office area that housed engineers and management.

Ernie walked through a small maze of cubicles with his lunch bag and thermos in hand.

He saw a female employee while she worked at her desk. His heart started fluttering. Her name was Rebecca Turley, and she was a beautiful twenty-four-year-old brunette with large brown eyes and a figure to die for. She worked as a secretary for Engineering Manager Kenny Roscoe during the past two years. And it had been two years where Ernie wanted to ask her out, but could never drum up the courage. He often got tongue-tied when he tried that move.

Ernie kept a watchful eye on Rebecca while he walked through the area.

He didn't notice his surroundings and smacked into a cubicle wall while he watched her. The items on the other side of the wall made a racket when they crashed to that cubicle floor.

Rebecca heard the noise and looked up from her work and saw Ernie. She rolled her eyes and went back to her typing. She wasn't really interested in him in the least.

Ernie rushed away red face and rushed into his cubicle.

His two-man cubicle was where he worked with fellow engineer sixty-year-old Louie Rodriguez. Louie worked on wing designs while Louie specialized in electronics and wiring.

The cubicles consisted of two drafting tables and two filing cabinets.

Ernie was still embarrassed while he sat down at his drafting table. He opened up the thermos and took a drink of coffee. He glanced over to his right and saw Louie was not at work yet even though he saw his Harley in the parking lot.

He kicked back and started reviewing his design for an airplane wing.

The phone on his drafting table rang, and he picked it up.

"Ernie Conner," he answered.

"Hi baby, it's mom," Beth Whitfield Conner said from the phone.

"Hi mom," Ernie replied.

"I haven't seen you in months, so why don't you come over for dinner tonight?"

"Is dad going to be there?"

"Yes."

Ernie looks a little disinterested.

"I would love it if you come," Beth said in a sweet tone.

"I would love dinner with you. What time?"

"Six sharp."

"I'll be there."

"Great. See you later tonight. Love you," Beth said then disconnected her end of the call.

Ernie hung up his phone.

Louie looked over his shoulder while he entered the cubicle with a large paper bag in hand. He was bald with a long ponytail to the middle of his back and a cheesy mustache.

Louie rushed over to his drafting table and shoved the paper bag underneath it.

Ernie got up and peeked over the top of his cubicle wall. He eyed Rebecca and yearned to have the opportunity to be romantically involved with her. He wondered what it would be like to kiss her sweet lips.

He sat back down.

"Have you asked her out yet?" Louie asked him.

"No. Not yet," Ernie replied and looked a little disappointed with himself.

"Hurry up, man. No guts, no filled condom," Louie said then chuckled.

"I don't want to suffer through the embarrassment of being rejected."

"Man, you're going to spend the rest of your life dating Rosie Palm and her five sisters," Louie replied then simulated jerking off.

Kenny Roscoe entered the cubicle and saw Louie's hand gesture. He gave Louie a dirty look.

Louie quickly started working on his design with a quiet whistle.

"Ernie, get down to the floor. They're having an issue with installing a wing," Kenny said while he kept a suspicious eye on Louie and the paper bag under his drafting table.

"Okay Kenny," Ernie said then got up from his drafting table.

Kenny left the cubicle, and Louie sighed a sigh of relief.

Ernie left the cubicle.

Louie reached down and opened the paper bag and smiled at the sight of some fittings and other airplane parts. He closed the bag with a grin. He then opened up the drawer on his drafting table and removed a book on time-travel. He opened the book and discreetly read.

The day passed on, and Ernie was on his way to his parents for dinner. He loved being with Beth, but his dad Jesse always made him feel uneasy and a little intimidated.

Ernie pulled his Tercel into the circular brick driveway of an expensive upper-class home of his parents.

This home was located in the fancy neighborhood called Waterford Heights located on the western part of town. The expensive home was the result of Jesse owning the prosperous Chevrolet dealership.

A 1968 Chevrolet Impala with rust holes was parked across the street from Jesse's home.

Inside the car behind the wheel was Laurence Lincoln, a fifty-one-year-old African-American. He eyed Ernie's Tercel with keen interest while he parked in the circular driveway.

"He's gotta be Ernie," Laurence said while he watched while Ernie got out of his car.

Ernie was dressed in dress pants and a dress shirt while he walked to the large, expensive wood doors.

Laurence stared at the expensive home with a little hatred in his eyes.

He looked in his rearview mirror and saw a man walking his German Shepherd on a leash down the sidewalk. He started up his Impala.

Laurence's Impala drove away in a trail of white exhaust.

The man walking his German Shepherd looked irritated while the Impala's exhaust came his way.

Beth greeted Ernie into her home with a kiss on the cheek. Beth was now forty-six years old and was still a knock out for her age.

She walked him to the dining room where the table was set for dinner with two glasses of wine and a glass of Coke.

"Have a seat, and I'll go get Jesse. He's in his den," she said then walked out of the dining room.

Ernie sat down two seats from the head of the table and waited.

A few seconds passed, and Beth and Jesse entered the dining room.

Jesse was now forty-nine years old and started to show some gray hair in his crew cut. He was still muscular and intimidating in size. He wore dress pants, dress shirt, and his standard brown snake skinned cowboys.

"Ernie," Jesse said while he sat down at the head of the table.

Ernie stood up and pulled out the chair next to the head of the table for Beth.

"Thank you," she said while she sat down.

Jesse rolled his eyes.

Beth saw him and gave his hand a little tap. "You need to be more of a gentleman.

Beth grabbed a small bell and rang it.

The swinging door from the kitchen opened, and an African-American woman entered with a tray that contained three plates of Prime Rib dinners with mashed potatoes, mixed vegetables, and a salad.

A few minutes later, and dinner started.

"Ernie, come on down to the dealership on Saturday. We have some new Camaros that just arrived," Jesse said then shoved a piece of Prime Rib in his mouth. His salad was untouched.

"I'm happy with my Tercel. It's extremely reliable," Ernie said then ate some salad.

Jesse gave Ernie a stern look. "But you bought it in Emerson taking money away from my dealership," he said in a bit of a raised voice.

"I like Toyota's. I think they're cute. And besides, that was daddy's dealership before you took over," Beth said and gave Jesse a look to remind him.

Jesse ignored Beth's comment and look.

"No, I want him inside an American made car. And that's that," Jesse said in a louder voice while he stared at Ernie.

Ernie felt intimidated by Jesse's stare. "Yes, sir."

"Good," Jesse said then took a drink of wine.

Beth rolled her eyes at Jesse then looked at Ernie. "So, is there any romance in your life?" she said with hopeful eyes then ate some of her salad.

"Not at the moment."

"Don't be scared of the opposite sex. Some grandkids one day would be nice," she said.

"Maybe for you Beth, but I'm way too young to be a grandfather," Jesse said then shoved some mashed potatoes in his mouth.

"I would love some grandkids. Especially since I can't have any. Right, Jesse?" she said and looked at Jesse with a raised eyebrow.

"Whatever," Jesse said then took another bite of his Prime Rib.

It was quiet for a few seconds while they ate.

Beth's eyes widened when she remembered something. "Oh, guess what I heard on the news today? Laurence Lincoln was released from state prison."

Jesse looked bothered by the news. "Released? Why?"

"Good behavior I guess," she replied, then took a drink of wine.

"Good behavior my ass," Jesse said then took a drink of his wine.

"Who is Laurence Lincoln?" Ernie curiously asked while he looked at Beth.

"Someone your father and I knew a long time ago. You know, he robbed a bank and did something horrible," she replied.

"What did horrible thing did he do?" Ernie asked while his curiously kicked into high gear.

Jesse slammed down his fork, interrupting Beth. "I don't want to hear any more discussions about this," Jesse said then bolted up with his glass of wine from the table.

Beth looked concerned while she watched Jesse storm out of the room.

Ernie got more curious about Jesse's behavior.

It was quiet while Ernie and Beth finished their dinner.

Thirty minutes had passed, and inside his den, Jesse sat in his expensive leather chair and smoked a

cigar with a glass of brandy in hand. He was in deep thought and still looked bothered.

Ernie entered the room and stood by the doorway. "I'm heading back to my place."

Jesse remained in deep thought.

Ernie waited for a response.

Jesse waved Ernie off.

Ernie left.

Jesse gulped down his brandy and looked bothered.

Beth walked arm in arm with Ernie through the living room.

"What's with this Laurence Lincoln guy?" he curiously asked Beth.

"Oh, it's nothing. I never should have mentioned his name," she said while they walked closer to the front door.

When they got to the front door, Ernie gave Beth a little kiss on her cheek.

"It was good seeing you tonight," she said while she opened the door.

"I enjoyed dinner," he replied with his little white lie because he never enjoyed being around Jesse.

Beth gave Ernie a loving smile while he left the house.

A little while later, Ernie drove his Tercel through the streets of Waterford. The previous discussion about Laurence Lincoln was still on his mind. He was curious about this man, and his curiosity often got him in trouble.

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