

Temple City Motel

By Beatrice Teigen

It was the middle of the summer. The year was 2006. That summer I turned 18 years old. My dog Batman and I were headed toward the Temple City Motel. I heard once you became 18, you can become an adult and move away from your house. So the week before I left I dyed my hair bright blue and got a skull tattoo on my left foot. Then the next day I dyed my hair brown and got my tattoo removed. I was *not* ready for that.

Batman was a tiny, black, French poodle. He came with a cape, which was why I named him Batman. My mom got him for me when I turned ten. My mom has brown hair and blue eyes, just like me. I told her that I was going on this trip 2 weeks before I left. For my birthday, she got me all the things that I needed for my trip. She also got me the thing that I had wanted for every birthday since I was 9 years old: a Nancy Drew Spy kit. I love Nancy Drew. I have all of her books and have seen all of her tv shows. That's another thing me and my mom have in common.

The reason I was going on this trip was to learn more about myself. The only reason I stayed in this motel in particular was because my mom met my dad here when she took this same trip I am taking. That's why my mom named me Temple, after that Motel. (While Temple is a strange name, at least she didn't name me Motel.) I never knew my dad, my mom decided to move on when she found out that she was pregnant. It has always been just her and me, but I knew from pictures that I look just like she did when she was 18. I found the motel one day driving to my last week of high school before summer break. When I got home from school that day I asked my mom about it and she said that she met my dad there.

So then I planned my trip. I was going from SLC, Utah to Cape Charles, Virginia. I packed up all of my stuff and off I went! But I didn't go too far because the Temple City motel isn't too far from my house. I wanted to stay there for three days.

When I got to the motel, I checked in with the front desk and went to unpack my stuff. Then I found my Nancy Drew Spy kit. I opened it up and looked through the contents: a Nancy Drew spy hand book. A finger print kit, a decoder ring (that decodes 20 different codes,) 2 handcuffs, and a flashlight. It had everything I need for my spying procedures. I grabbed Batman and my spy kit and headed down to the lobby. The manager was there at his desk talking with another employee behind the counter. Batman and I sat down in a huge comfy chair in the lobby and I took out my notebook. I wrote down everything they said to each other. I was very good at eavesdropping, as an only child I feel like I had been practicing my whole life.

Employee: What are you doing?

Manager: Just looking at the registration card of the girl who checked in this morning.

Employee: Why?

Manager: Because when she checked in this morning she looked so familiar. I decided to see what I could find online.

Employee: What did you find?

Manager: She is 18 years old and lives here in Salt Lake City.

Employee: What is so special about that?

Manager: This is either a really big coincidence, or this girl is my daughter!

Batman sneezed. I had heard enough, I grabbed Batman and my stuff and sneaked back to my room. My heart was pumping wildly. I skipped dinner and went straight to bed. But I couldn't sleep, I thought about this all night. I only had two days left in this motel and I just had to figure out what was going on.

Then I woke up the next morning, got dressed and brushed my hair. I grabbed Batman and his leash and set off to find a good place to eat. Right when I was about to open the door I hear a knock. I opened the door and there stood the manager.

Me: What are you doing here?

Him: That is what I should have asked you the other day.

He looked over my shoulder at the spy kit.

Him: Huh, spying.

Me: What is your name?

Him: Mike, Mike Carson.

Him: What is your name? You look just like someone I used to know.

Me: Temple Emerson.

Him: Is your mom Emily Emerson? You are her spitting image.

Me: Yes. How do you know her?

Him: I fell in love with her one summer 18 years ago. I never knew she had a baby.

We talked for about two hours at Carlucci's. I realized how much I grew to like him while we were talking. I found out that he was very nice and funny. He told me about his obsession with Hardy Boys and I told him about me and my mother's obsession with Nancy Drew. Me and dad and I had a lot in common. I shared the looks of my mom and the personality of my dad. We discovered that we both liked bikes and dogs, and the same music and foods, especially Carlucci's cheesecake.

The Temple City Motel might be where my mom found my kooky name, but where I found my dad and the love of my life. I went to the University of Utah and during the summers I worked at the Temple City Motel. I graduated from the U with a degree in hospitality. Upon graduation I became the manager of the Temple City Motel. This is where I found my partner in life, Elizabeth and our new dog Robin.