She was ghostly, by name and by nature. Her pale, porcelain skin showed imperfection, the crease above her perfect brow was a sign of worry. And as she gracefully moved along the deserted sidewalk, she reminded me of her tall, beautiful parents. How she beared such a resemblance to their stick thin limbs, their icy skin, their jet black hair and their green-gold eyes. Yes, Ghostly was a diamond in the rough, Ghostly Gem, the dark but pure angel of my once, boring life.

She floated around, almost literally. She glided, so smoothly, yet her feet touched the ground. She was pain, she was grace, she was everything. A scar deep in the flesh of my world. During the difficult time, adolescence, other teenage girls were powdering their bumpy skin and painting their spidery nails. But Ghostly, perfect Ghostly, chewed endlessly on her own nails, a sign. A sign that she was thinking her unique thoughts.

I have only ever seen her spill her perfect smile, her amazing smile, once. The corners of her thick, pale lips pulled up and her perfect white teeth showed themselves, she laughed and her lips danced, even her details could move with such grace. As she laughed, the room fell silent; every single being in that room was in awe at such a lovely, imperfect but completely perfect girl.

Beauty. One word. Her word.

I recognise those lines, sculptured into her heart-shaped face, worry. I wanted to know, I had to know, what problem was poisoning he face, her life. She always deserved the best, yet she has never received it.

And so, there we were, surrounded by a haunting, dim light; I could make out her beautiful but worried face, her tangled, midnight black hair and fear in her big bold eyes. It was just her, and me, in that old decrepit house. Why did I take an angel to such a place? To feel her trembling figure huddled against mine? Why panic such a beauty for a simple embrace? Her fear was my fault!

BANG!

I'm sure she was as terrified as I was. I felt guilt, regret, that room, that house, is a horror house, one that should be encountered only in a movie. Yes, a movie, that was exactly what it felt like! It couldn't have been real! That was my chance to rescue the helpless damsel in distress, my angel, my Ghostly.

Her weak arms slipped around my waist and we huddled together, listening to quiet footsteps approach. I heard a shrill scream and the precious, angelic, delicate Ghostly was snatched from my grip…

**Highly commended in this category:**

Entry number 008 “The Ghostly Figure” by Holly Theissen

I was walking along the streets of the city one afternoon. I heard a scream from above. There was a girl falling from a building. “Claire!” I yelled out. She was falling. Fast. I heard a bone-cracking thump when she hit the ground.

I ran to Claire and sat next to her. Everyone was crowding around the body. Blood was puddling around us. There was a gun a metre away. How could anyone shoot my cousin?
Two people were pushing into the centre of commotion. They were the police. At some point I realised I was sitting in an ambulance with a blanket wrapped around me. I was still at the crime scene. It had gotten dark. Everything had been a blur.

The past 2 hours came back to me in technicolour. Every vision was in different snap shot frames. Claire falling, arms spread wide, hair whipping around. Then her crashing down on the ground hard enough to form cracks, Claire’s face being completely vacant. It all replayed over and over.

A while later I found myself sitting at home. My mum had picked me up at some point. I couldn’t eat, drink, sleep. I felt numb. I would just sit there for countless ages. I missed school for a week. I eventually got up and had a shower. I hoped that the hot water would wash away the pain and grief. I couldn’t close my eye as to not have flash backs.

Eventually I got out. There was a call a few days ago, from the autopsy. Claire died from the fall, but she had received a shot in the neck before she died. That would explain the gun. We had to find the killer first, before we could bury her. I couldn’t imagine that after her body decomposed, all that would be left were rotten bones. The bones of Claire.

After I had gotten dressed I walked around the house to see where my mum was. She had left to go to Claire’s parent’s apartment. The phone rang as soon as I finished reading the note.

“Hello?” I talked through the speaker.  
“Hey Amelia,” It was my mum. “We have some news”.  
“What sort of news?”  
“About Claire. They have identified the killer,” I shuddered as mum said that. “The man is going on trial in a fortnight.”

I had to know the face of the man that killed Claire. I just had to. I hung up on my mum, forgetting that she was even on the phone.

The day I had been dreading had come. The Trial. I sat at the table, being a witness to the crime. The man that had killed Claire was sitting at the dais. He looked familiar.

“What case do you plead?” bellowed the judge.  
“Not guilty,” replied the man. NOT GUILTY! How can he plead not guilty? He killed a girl.

The trial went on. 5 minutes before the end, I realised who the man was. It was Claire’s 9th Grade teacher. Her teacher killed her. I hoped he would die for it, for Claire.

Highly commended in this category:  
Entry number 101 “The Ghost in the Attic” by Yeliz Habiboglu