

ISABELLE GRAY'S STORY

By Lea Berrios

The town of Bridged Valley is a precisely built town located in Southern California. This town has everything you could ever need; however this society is nothing but a dystopia. The people of the town are greatly miserable and depressed. They just want to leave and explore the outside world; see loved ones that they haven't seen in years too, but they can't. They are trapped in the town of Bridged Valley and are forbidden to leave thanks to the *Watcher* and his strict rules.

My name is Isabelle Gray, and I'm 17 years old. Ever since I found out that there's more to this world than this lousy town, I've been trying to find a way out. I've been stuck in this town my whole life and I want out. I'm sick and tired of the mistreatment and how strict the rules are. We get in trouble for the littlest Things. We can't even roam the streets at certain times. I hate this stupid town and the stupid Watcher. I *will* find a way out.

"Mom, I'm leaving to the library." I said.

"Okay honey, be safe and stay out of trouble." Mom replied.

As Isabelle's walking to the library

Back in 1954, the Valley was left with no choice but to isolate themselves from the rest of the world due to drastic changes to the climate; or so we thought. Now It's

1973 and Bridged Valley is Mostly populated with a younger generation at this point. The older generation were separated from their young which is why there is rarely any of them around. However the few that are still around tell us of the outside world. Some people believe them, others don't. (I of course do.) I like the idea that there is more outside of this hellhole bubble we live in. Anyways, the young are raised to believe that the town is all they need and if they try to leave they'll be punished by the Watcher. Now who is this Watcher you might ask? Well that's the thing, no one knows! All we know is that the Watcher was set up originally to protect the people- although overtime he has developed his own sentience and is making decisions on his own that are affecting the community. The rules the Watcher made are extremely strict and if you disobey you'll be punished. Be careful of what you say or do because the Watcher is always watching-hence the name.

As I enter the library I greet the lovely librarian Mrs. Plaza.

"Hi Mrs. Plaza!"

"Hello Isabelle! Here to help out again?"

"Yes!! But first I actually need to get some school work done. After that i'll come back here to see what I can help you out with."

"Sounds great! Well see you in a jiff then."

Since I spend a lot of time at the Valley's library, I found a secret room that not

even Mrs. Plaza herself knows about it. I look around carefully to make sure that no one is watching, and head into the secret room. One day I found an old dairy hidden underneath the floorboard; I was shocked at what was written in it. The family that “mysteriously vanished” years ago actually ran away. The diary was written by one of the daughters of the family, Emily Thompson. Emily wrote about how her and her family successfully escaped from Bridged Valley, and how whoever finds her diary can too. Apparently there's this secret hidden bridge in the forbidden forest that is the key to escaping.

“WAIT, WAIT, WAIT. IT’S NOT HERE?? I COULD’VE SWORN I PUT IT HERE. I know I didn’t misplace it. SOMEONES BEEN IN HERE. HOW?? HOW IS THAT POSSIBLE???” I’m going crazy looking for this damn diary. Where the heck is it?! I started panicking, hoping I just misplaced it.

“Looking for this?” A low, raspy unknown voice says behind me. I turn quickly to see who it was. A tall man dressed in all black from head to toe stands still in front of me. He wore a black mask that prevented his face from being revealed. In his right hand; *the diary.*

“Are- are you the Watcher?” Isabelle says terrified. *Silence fills the room* The silence is so loud the to the point the only thing I can hear is my heart racing throughout my body, and the sound of my breathing getting heavier. Seconds feel like hours. At

this point I'm sweating and shaking with fear. *"My secret is now known. But how??? I*

made sure that I was careful." Tears slowly started to fill my eyes. I know what's going to happen next. The man is still standing there in the doorway; watching me, saying nothing. He charges at me, grabs me, and covers my mouth with a white cloth.

"I'm not the watcher." He says "I'm just someone he sent to keep an eye on you, and now you've upset him."

The room slowly goes black.

Couple of hours later

I wake up in what appears to be a surgical room. People in all black stand around me. I can't speak or move. I'm strapped down to the bed. Two of the black clothed people approach me with a needle in hand. I can't fight back; I'm frozen, unable to stop what's about to happen to me. The black clothed people injected the needle in me. I instantly felt dizzy. My eyes feel as heavy as bricks. My body feels light. I feel like I'm floating away. Like gravity doesn't exist anymore. Before I know it I'm going through this tunnel. I see a light-