

# Trust Me... Or Not...

(by Keilyn Kitahara)

Anna turned up the collar to her jacket against the fierce wind. She was walking down Bedford Street and just passed the Ferguson Library under a crisp, autumn sky. The wind buffeted her as she struggled into the doors of her apartment building. Once inside, she stepped into the elevator and pressed the button for the twelfth floor. The rusted steel doors clanged closed, and her phone buzzed in her jacket pocket. Anna pulled it out, wondering if it was another message from her boss. Stocks were dropping, and Anna's boss was having her work overtime. Instead, the message was from someone unknown, and it read: **"Don't trust them."** Just as suddenly as it appeared, the message disappeared. Anna's fingers tightened around her phone, and she shivered as chills shot up her spine. Her mind was whirling, who is this person, and who are *they*?

The clock on her desk read 11:45 p.m., but Anna couldn't sleep. She had to just finish one more email, but she couldn't focus, not with the unknown message on her mind. The lamp on her desk threw shadows against the walls as she typed out another sentence. Something beeped and her computer showed her an email. Heart thudding, she read it. The email address caught her eye, [Tru\\$t.M3@vanish.com](mailto:Tru$t.M3@vanish.com). *Trust me?* Anna thought, wasn't that what a betrayer would say before things went bad? Wasn't she warned not to trust someone? Is this a trick? She quickly read the message. Two words, **"Trust Me..."**

A soft scratching noise filled the room, and Anna's head snapped to the window, her green eyes frantically searching the night. Something dark was just there, but that wasn't possible, this is the twelfth floor, nothing could get to the window. Another message, same email address, **"We're coming..."** Her phone beeped, the same number as the one in the elevator. **"You need to get out, they're closer than you think."** Then the message disappeared, just like last time. Her computer told her there was a new email. It read, **"I see you..."** Suddenly her lamp's light was extinguished, and darkness fell. Anna's heart stopped. The only light was from her computer, and peering at the screen made her blood run cold. Something was happening to her screen, the edges of it looked blurred, smeared, and the letters were moving as if something, or *someone* were rearranging them. Her hand went to grab her mouse, but before she could reach it the screen went black.

Anna sat as still as possible, wondering if she would dare move. Then, the words **"Trust ME"** appeared, as if written by an invisible hand. They shimmered and contorted, as if glitching uncontrollably. The familiar lines of the room began to blur, then pixelate and snap back to reality. *Was this real, or was this all in her head?* That awful laughter filled the air, and Anna didn't move. *Where was the sound? The walls, the*

*window, or in her imagination?*

Her phone showed her a message **“They’re almost in the building, RUN.”** Some part of Anna knew she should obey, but she was rooted to the spot. Her lamp, which was perfectly still a second ago, was violently thrown against the wall, filling the room with the sound of shattered glass, and for a heart-stopping moment Anna swore she heard distant, evil laughter. The same eerie scratching noise penetrated the room, and Anna was thrown to the floor.

In a heartbeat, Anna was pinned against the floor by something unknown. Anna had no air, she couldn’t scream. Then her phone beeped a foot away, producing a message: **“I told you not to trust them.”** She heard distant laughter, echoing from her computer, the last sound she ever heard before the world went dark. Her phone, now forgotten next to Anna’s lifeless body, illuminated one last message: **“Too late…”** New words appeared on the computer, **“You belong to us now.”**

Hours passed, and the ruined apartment grew steadily darker, only illuminated by a phone’s flickering screen. Everything was dead still, until suddenly, **a pair of green eyes snapped open...**

And the phone’s light finally died.