

Counting Sheep

“One...Two...” I boredly counted each sheep as they slowly made their way into the barn for the night. The sheep softly bleated at me as they passed. I yawned.

God...This was tiring.

After I counted the last sheep, I shut the barn door. I also shut the gate that was connecting the barn and the grazing area. I finally made my way into the house, to get some sleep.

The phone started ringing as I passed it by. I picked it up, and put the receiver to my ear. It was one of those old type phones.

“Hello?”

“Finley! Thanks again for watching my sheep. Did you count them all?” My best friend, Max greeted me, his voice echoed slightly through the phone.

“Yep. All fifteen of them.” I responded tiredly.

“Great. I owe you man. See you soon!”

Max hung up as soon as he said that. I set the phone back down. Max owned this place. This home, and sheep farm. He had gone on vacation for the week, and trusted me with his sheep. It was actually really easy to take care of them. I just had to let them out each morning to graze, then count them each night to make sure none of them went missing.

I went up the stairs, to the second floor. I passed by Max’s room. I wasn’t allowed to go in there. No matter how much I wanted to. My temporary bedroom was his guest room. It was across the hall from his room. I opened the door, and shut it as soon as I got inside. I quickly put on some pajamas, and slipped into bed. This week is going to pass by quickly...

“Good morning sheepies...” I muttered, opening the barn door to let the extremely docile sheep out to graze. They all shuffled past me, and into the fenced up grazing area. I latched the gate up, so none of them would get back into the barn.

I went back inside the house to read some comics as, sadly, Max didn't have a TV. I hopped onto the couch and flipped through one quickly. It took all of two minutes. I sighed. I just had to do that for the rest of the day...

I blinked my eyes open, groggily. I had fallen asleep. I checked my watch. 9:15. It was time to get all of the sheep inside of the barn. I got up and went outside. They were all standing near the gate, anxiously waiting to get inside. I unlatched it, and started counting all of the sheep, as they trotted past me to get inside the barn.

“Fifteen, sixteen...” I frowned. The last sheep trotted inside the barn.

Sixteen? Max only had fifteen sheep...I shrugged it off. I must've miscounted. I shut the barn door, and jogged back into the house. I went up the stairs, and into the guest bedroom. I threw my clothes off, and put on some plaid pajamas. I climbed into bed, flicking the lamp off, and shut my eyes.

I yawned, slowly opening my eyes. I rolled over, not wanting to get up. Loud sheep baaing outside forced me to get up. It was 6:55.

I threw on a sweater, and went downstairs, then outside. I opened the barn and gate. The sheep calmly shuffled out of the barn to graze. I locked the gate, and went inside to eat a sandwich for breakfast.

As I finished making it, the phone started ringing. I went over and answered it.

“Hello?”

“Hey Fin. How are my sheep?” Max’s voice asked, sounding preoccupied.

“They’re fine.” I replied.

“Okay. Bye.”

Max hung up immediately, like last time. It was starting to get annoying...

I set the phone down, noticing a pack of cards on the coffee table. I went over, taking a bite out of my sandwich. I guess I could just play some card games today... I sat down on the couch and started shuffling.

I woke up suddenly, sprawled out on the couch. Cards covered the ground, and coffee table.

I had fallen asleep again. I could hear the impatient bleating of the sheep outside. It was getting dark out...

I got up and jogged outside to let the sheep back into their barn. I unlocked the barn and gate, then started counting the sheep as they passed me. Some stopped to baa at me.

“Eighteen...” I narrowed my eyes.

Eighteen sheep? I shook my head, I must’ve counted wrong again. I shut the barn door, and went back inside to sleep. I went up the old wooden stairs, walked into the guest bedroom, and flopped onto the bed. I didn’t bother to change clothes.

I woke up, tired. I had to let the sheep out to graze again...I practically crawled out of bed, and down the stairs. I stumbled outside.

I opened the barn.

I opened the gate.

The sheep trotted past, ignoring me.

I went back inside, hungry. I noticed the playing cards littered on the coffee table, and floor. I sighed. I should probably clean it up. After putting the last card back into the box, the phone started ringing. I set the box down, and went over to the phone. I picked it up, answering it.

“Hey Max.”

I assumed it was Max who was calling.

“Yo Finley!”

I was right.

“Could you water my flowers? They’re near the sheep barn.”

“Sure.”

And just like last time, Max hung up right away.

I was getting very annoyed with that.

I knew where Max kept the watering can. It was under his sink. I went into the kitchen, and opened the cabinet under the sink. The dark green watering can was inside, laying there.

I grabbed it, and put it in the sink, filling it with water. I brought it outside, and looked for the flowers Max was talking about.

I saw them near the barn.

Max wanted me to water *those*?

They looked like they would crumble at the slightest touch. They looked pretty much dead. I shrugged, and started watering them.

After I finished, I set the watering can on the ground, and went over to the fence, looking at the sheep. One of the smaller sheep walked over to the fence, gazing at me with its dark brown eyes.

“Hey bud.” I greeted it.

The sheep blinked, then trotted away. I laughed slightly, then laid down on the grass, tired. I shut my eyes. What would the harm be in resting my eyes for a moment...

My eyes fluttered open, adjusting to the total darkness. I sat up slightly, peering into the darkness ahead of me. I jumped when I saw unnaturally glowing eyes, as a sheep stared back at me.

“Stupid sheep...” I muttered to myself, shakily getting up.

The sheep didn’t move, they just continued staring, not blinking. I frowned, staring at one of the sheep in the far back of the field. I thought I saw its eyes glowing...red?

I shook it off, moving towards the gate, to count the sheep, get them into the barn, and then finally getting some sleep.

Honestly, I hate sheep now...They are so creepy.

I unlatched the gate, and started counting the sheep as they trotted past me, and into the barn.

“Eighteen...” I murmured softly, watching the last sheep go into the barn.

I couldn’t possibly be miscounting now, eighteen was the exact same number I got last night.

Something was wrong.

I peered into the barn, feeling eyes watching me.

I turned cold.

I noticed two, huge red glowing eyes staring back at me. A deep, demonic bleating coming from the creature inside the barn. It sounded sort of like a sheep, but demonic. That’s not possible.

Not thinking, I turned and sprinted into the house. I ran over to the phone, scrambling to pick it up.

Max.

He had to help me. Trembling, I quickly dialed his number. He picked up, almost immediately.

“Fin?”

“Max! You have to help...T-The sheep! I kept counting eighteen of them...There’s something wrong with one of your sheep! I think it might...” I trailed off.

All I could hear on the other end was a soft buzzing sound.

“I’m sorry Finley.” Max apologized quietly.

I frowned, scared. “Max?”

“I’m really sorry,” Max sounded sincere. “It’s not a sheep...I really am sorry. But...He was hungry...And I need to feed him...I’m so sorry Fin.”

“Max?!”

The line went dead. He hung up on me...

I was confused, scared, hurt. I didn’t understand what Max said. *He was hungry? Who?* I heard loud and heavy footsteps behind me.

“Finley...”

A deep, unhuman-like voice whispered behind me, it sounded like it was taunting me somehow.

I wanted to just collapse onto the ground, and pretend none of this was happening.

But I couldn’t.

Shaking, I fearfully turned around...