

Mr. or Ms. Editor or Agent
123 Somewhere St.
Brooklyn, NY 12345

Dear Mr. or Ms. Editor or Agent,

The fields of professional sports and entertainment are sprinkled with successful stars who have triumphed in spite of a rough background and unfortunate childhoods. The ranks of high finance, business, and commerce boast many individuals who can be said to have been born with barbed wire in their mouth, not smooth silver. But for most people, being born into the jungle produces savage behavior.

A Stalker's Journey is an imaginative attempt to get inside the mind and life of a career criminal, one whose impulse is to cheat and connive for fortune rather than work for one. By age two, Curtis Evan Ware is motherless, left to be raised by an alcoholic father, when his mother succumbs to cocaine addiction. By sixteen, he has been incarcerated for violent crime and spends a year as bait in a sexual shark tank, victimized in a way that he will later seek to inflict on others—beginning with a Girl Scout bringing him cookies.

But when Curtis targets a neighborhood in a small town in Maine, he meets an opponent impervious to his wiles as a con man. Paperboy Ace Gordon and his friends Willy and Donnie McNolte manage to thwart Curtis's attempts at abduction and embezzlement, though they hardly grasp the extent of the danger they have faced until years after the event, when Curtis Ware is removed from civil society for a long time. In the end, though, Ace and the reader will be left struggling with the puzzle of what causes one person to follow the path of evil and self-destruction, and another to choose the path of good, though both have similar upbringings.

A Stalker's Journey is a 45,000 psychological crime novel that a reviewer of an earlier, self-published version referred to as a “. . . disturbing and prized item on your electronic or physical shelf . . .” I have previously self-published two other short novels in the horror genre, *The Haunted Trail* and its sequel, *The Haunted Trail: The War of the Dublin Woods*. I have included a synopsis, outline, and the first pages of the manuscript.

Thank you for your consideration. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

John C. Lukegard

A Stalker's Journey: Synopsis

From birth, Curtis Evan Ware has a rough path through life. Both his parents are alcoholics, and his mother dies of a cocaine overdose when her son is just two years old. At 16, he wrecks his car after botching the robbery of a cocaine dealer, and is left with a glass left eye and a limp. During his year's sentence in juvenile detention, Curtis is raped and in self-defense grows his fingernails out as weapons, a trait that will come to define the increasingly volatile adult he becomes. Five years after his release, Curtis is arrested and convicted as a sex offender when he tries to assault a Girl Scout delivering cookies.

Six years later, after his release from prison, Curtis relocates to Riverside, Maine and moves in with his older brother, Eric. When Curtis runs amuck at a carnival midway and injures several people, he is arrested and again serves a sentence, this time for six months. Upon his release, Curtis returns to Riverside and reconfigures his secondhand car as an unregistered taxi cab and begins searching for victims he can scam. He undertakes a series of poorly executed robberies and confidence scams that barely allow him to maintain his slovenly apartment. While driving around Arrow Street scoping out sites for his illegal activities and likely victims, Curtis harasses a nine-year-old paperboy named Ace Gordon, though the alert young man eludes the unsavory cab driver and is now on his guard against him.

Over the next several months, Ace and his friends Willy and Donnie McNolte find themselves increasingly harassed and endangered by the erratic and vengeful Curtis, who threatens Ace with violence and tries to abduct him from a Halloween party. An egg-throwing incident between Curtis and the other boys leaves Curtis with a scarred lip and another jail sentence, this time for three months. Upon his release, Curtis's illegal activities escalate, and he steals a large amount of copper wiring from a machine shop, which he trades for cocaine. Finally, when Ace and his friends stumble across Curtis as he prepares to burglarize a neighbor's house, the maddened deviant tries to stab Ace and is once again caught by the police. Sent to prison, Curtis disappears from Riverside for fourteen years, though Ace is haunted by nightmares of the terrifying man with long fingernails whose identity he never knew.

After serving a ten-year sentence and four years of parole, Curtis Evan Ware returns to Riverside with a single, burning goal: to wreak vengeance on the young man who he believes ruined his life. When the young men that Ace and Willy have now become find themselves being terrorized by two men in an Isuzu, they have no idea why. During a car chase, Curtis again tries to slash Ace, first with a knife, and then with his long fingernails. A few months pass, and the neighborhood experiences a crime wave. But Curtis, who is homeless, makes the mistake of squatting at the same construction site where he earlier stole some copper wire, and is apprehended and sent to prison yet again for a very long time. The next morning, when Ace reads in the newspaper that the man who recently terrorized him and Willy is named Curtis Ware, he puzzles over the name: Where has he heard it before? Gradually, it dawns on him: the man in the illegal cab, the man with the talon-like nails, the man with a glass eye: Curtis Ware. A childhood tormented by stalking, lurking danger, and harassment now falls into place. The long nightmare that shadowed his life is finally dispelled.