



# Straight or Left

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\*Winner of a weekly flash fiction contest on Indies Unlimited\*

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Which direction should she go? Tanya had to make a decision. And she had to do it quickly. Taking a deep breath and pursing her lips, Tanya depressed the accelerator. Straight it would be. Straight

away from her lifetime home. Straight into the unknown. Straight onto the longest bridge in the world—ironic for someone panicky about crossing bridges, but that was how desperate her situation had become. After discovering his great-grandmother's "collection," Jesse had immersed himself in the dark arts, over time morphing into a scary and paranoid Doppelganger, the very opposite of the man she had married. When Tanya confronted him, he claimed it was all in fun, that the bizarre rituals he performed didn't really do anything. But she knew better, on both counts. The last straw came when she found him, trance-like, mumbling an incantation over their wedding photo. Tanya waited until he'd left, then packed the car and headed for the bridge. Her fear lifted as she drove. She felt ready to start over, comfortable facing the unfamiliar. All too soon, however, the "other side" began to seem familiar. Frighteningly familiar. Spotting a Piggly Wiggly store just like the one at home didn't unsettle her—but seeing the identical twin of their local diner next to it did. An exact replica of Pontchartrain Elementary three blocks away sent her into a cold sweat. Tanya haltingly followed her usual route, dread growing with each well-known landmark. She parked and sat in terrified silence, staring at her house. Jesse stood out front, expecting her. "Welcome home, darlin'," he drawled, his eyes gleaming red. "Welcome home." \* \* \* © 2015 M.P. Witwer • All rights reserved; photo © K.S. Brooks • Used with permission, attribution required